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LABOR TAKES IN THE FAIR

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IT was one of those clear autumn nights at the end of the season, and in it the New York World's Fair gleamed white and pure under its myriad lights, a fairy city dedicated to the highest idealism, to progress, honesty, and America's aspirations for goodwill among men. But to Dr. Raphael Ernesto Lopez, the Venezuelan commissioner, the World of Tomorrow chiefly meant labor tyranny and overcharges which had caused a \$50,000 deficit in his budget. He hurried breathlessly through his government's building.

'We were invited by the President of the United States to make a gesture of international goodwill by exhibiting a bit of Venezuela so you might see what we are. To this end we were to be permitted to use native materials and specialists. But, once here, we have existed only as prey. Even little things!' he said. 'See those mahogany statues? A New York union demanded that its men carve them. It wouldn't allow our sculptors to work on the grounds. Then, because we insisted that only our natives could create Venezuelan art, the movers' union refused to transfer the statuary from their studio unless we paid a pen-

alty rate of \$300 for each of the five seven-foot pieces of wood.'

Fifteen hundred dollars! Any expressman and two helpers could have done the job in an afternoon.

'We had nothing to sell,' protested Dr. Lopez. 'We didn't want to displace American labor. We let the union paint that wall map, but only our own artists could paint those Venezuelan murals. Yet they were not allowed to work until we hired union men to watch them.'

'Always delays. Strikes. Disputes. Union delegates telling their men not to work too hard. Demands. Would you believe it? They wouldn't complete our building unless we paid union men \$26 a day to turn our lights off and on. I can't touch a switch. I couldn't plug in an electric razor to shave without violating union jurisdiction.'

Dr. Lopez gesticulated violently.

'I'm not anti-labor,' he said. 'In my country, where our laws are so advanced that laborers share in employers' profits and it is illegal to discharge a domestic servant without two weeks' notice, they call me a socialist. But never have I seen anything like this. Even our protests to the Fair management came to

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nothing. Mr. Grover Whalen requests us to exhibit again next year. But I ask him: how can I justify these expenditures to my government? It won't understand.'

I had gone to New York to investigate evidence that all was not well with the Fair. Dr. Lopez's complaint is mild compared with some of the others. A round robin signed by foreign exhibitors protests that 'in certain cases the normal wage of certain workers or foremen has increased to such an extent that it reached \$12, \$14, and even \$16 per hour' owing to 'overtime' resulting from 'instructions given by the unions to their members voluntarily to slow down work.' 'Thus,' the protest continues, 'one of the commissioners represented, although being able to get a workman of his country to do a certain paving job for approximately \$30, was obliged to use American labor and pay out \$600 for the same work.'

A \$3600 New England contract for electrical 'maintenance,' which prevented any but union men from touching a fixture, did not at first even provide for replacing a burned-out light bulb on less than thirty-six hours' notice. This presumably extraordinary service entailed employment of an additional electrical crew of three and an \$8.81 bill. Union rules prohibited Mr. and Mrs. Roxor Short from turning on lights so that they could paint their murals after the daily departure of the construction men afforded them elbowroom. The fuses disappeared with the workmen. The only solution was to pay overtime from 3.30 P.M. on for an electrician whose function it was to sit until he could extinguish the lights when the artists laid down their brushes.

These are fair samples from my notebook, 142 pages of which are crowded with similar woes. Naturally I was unable to question all exhibitors; there were too many. But every one I did question, foreign and domestic, was as full of complaints as Dr. Lopez. Moreover, what I was told checked in every

instance with information given me by press association reporters and with countless news dispatches already recorded by the *New York Times* and other local newspapers.

Consider such a situation, then, in the knowledge that the Fair's exhibitors totaled 1724; that the total construction outlay was in the neighborhood of \$150,000,000, with additional huge sums for maintenance; that the building costs of the foreigners alone are estimated by the *New York Times* to have soared at least \$10,000,000 over expectations, with the expenditures for individual exhibits catapulting 10 to 150 per cent — and in the sum you have an idea of what happened at the Fair.

II

Most persons today recognize that labor is entitled to governmental protection and self-protection and to the living wage made possible through the power of collective bargaining. Cognizant of old oppressions, it was the public which accorded labor the sympathy and support to gain this power with the hope that it would be applied intelligently. But any honest account of the Fair must portray a small but casehardened group of New York union agents applying this new-won power not to enforce the legitimate union wage, which all exhibitors were willing to pay, but to obtain exorbitant overcharges, to bully and squeeze the last drop of tribute from an exposition so tremendous and so motivated that it must stand as a measure and advertisement of American calibre.

To do this the little tsars showed that they were bigger than the Fair corporation, the United States Government, bigger even than the leading national officers of the American Federation of Labor, all of whose objections they overrode. Their own carpenters' union does not appear by the record to have been a party to their abuses, but that union, along with the entire labor movement,

has thereby suffered loss of prestige — as, for instance, when Nevada withdrew, partly in revolt against the electrical union's edict that its members rewire equipment brought to New York. The object in question was a five-ton working model of Boulder Dam. Had the union been permitted to chisel apart the thick concrete and put in new wires, *installation* of the state's exhibit would have cost \$9000.

Certainly our international relations and the income which accrues to all labor through foreign trade will not be bolstered by such abuses as those whereby unions, until stand-bys were hired, prohibited employment of foreign specialists who had been endorsed by the Labor Department as being essential to the exhibiting governments for work the Americans could not do. The Netherlands junked one of the Fair's most expensive exhibits partly because of this. It will be a long time before a good many nations cease to believe that one of their functions in the United States was to be exploited.

Of course, contractors have used the union abuses to cover their own attempted extortions at the Fair. In the case of the New York Zoological Society, a rigging and moving contractor proposed to charge \$600 for moving a small aquarium eighty feet. His explanation was that, besides equipment, he required six men for six days at \$17 a day apiece — which might have been convincing if the Society had not stumbled on another contractor who did the job in a half hour for \$7.70.

Union delegates, however, followed the aquarium into the grounds to demand that it be moved by their contractors. Again, the electricians' union prefers to have its men work for employers who play its game. Thus the ultimate responsibility is labor's, and on the face of the evidence the Fair must go down as one of America's most audacious adventures in labor tyranny.

Connecticut had to pay \$16 for one electrical wall outlet. But when canny Massachusetts managers were asked to pay \$13.30 for an outlet that would normally cost \$3.00 they turned the tables on the union. They accepted the bill as entirely legitimate, adding that they would expect that in writing off charges for seventeen other base plugs which had been eliminated by mutual consent from their exhibits the allowance would be made at the \$13.30 rate.

Others did not fare so well. Armando d'Ans, Argentina's architect, says that a nine-by-twelve-foot neon-lighted wall map, which the most expensive Buenos Aires firm charged \$800 to build, cost another \$8857 to repair and install at the Fair — this because the cost-plus contract produced a bill which listed five days of hire for three trucks at \$750 and employment of twenty-one men, more than half of them at overtime rates for nineteen hours a day.

III

In the beginning, the advertising stressed the Fair's lofty purposes. Admiral William H. Standley, director of foreign participation, declared that 'the countries participating would be treated courteously,' kept 'comfortable and happy' in a 'warm and human city.' Grover Whalen, the Fair's president, explained to the Foreign Commerce Club that the exposition would be a 'compelling impetus toward the harmonious coöperation of all groups.'

There was every reason to believe these advance notices. In all good faith Secretary of State Hull wrote to Mr. Whalen: 'Undertakings such as yours contribute significantly to the betterment of international relations and to the maintenance of world peace. . . . I am confident that under your able direction no effort will be spared by the management of the New York World's Fair to accord the representatives of foreign governments and foreign visitors

every mark of friendly and cordial hospitality.'

Had not the city council exempted building materials and exhibit articles from local sales taxes? Did not Congress remove the tariff from all imports which foreigners required in order to make the pavilions representative of their countries? Since the foreign exhibitors would clearly need their own native craftsmen, the Labor Department did everything to facilitate their entry. The French, the Dutch, and others told me they had been led to expect the extraterritoriality and immunity of a fair conducted under the rules of the International Bureau of Expositions. Lastly, the State Department and President Roosevelt issued the invitations in the name of the United States Government.

It is not surprising that foreign nations flocked to this sanctuary of brotherly love. But the joker appeared in the form of a contract between the Fair corporation and the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York — a contract which, though signed on April 27, 1937, did not have its terms made public until June 17, 1939, when they were announced in the *New York Times* by Thomas A. Murray, president of the Council. I am informed that the contract was intended to apply solely to the construction work of the Fair corporation. But why was it not extended to the construction of our foreign and our local exhibitors? The text follows:—

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BUILDING AND
CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL AND THE
WORLD'S FAIR AUTHORITIES

1. That the Building Department of the World's Fair Exposition will agree that in the performance of the construction, alteration, maintenance and repair work, to employ union labor and that labor so employed shall be trades chartered by their respective International Unions of the American Federation of Labor, having classification over work to be performed.

2. In the event of difficulty on any project

within the prescribed area of the World's Fair Exposition, that the Building and Construction Trades Council shall contact the authorized representatives of the World's Fair authorities relative to grievances. If, after twenty-four (24) hours notice the grievance has not been adjudicated, it is agreed that the members of the Unions shall remove themselves from all operations within the World's Fair area.

3. It is hereby agreed by the Building and Construction Trades Council, and its affiliated trades, that there shall be no stoppage of work by this Council, or its affiliated trades, on any jurisdictional dispute, and that same, if any, will be submitted, as per procedure established, to the Building Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor, or other tribunal approved by the Building Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor.

4. It is further agreed, by the World's Fair authorities, and all other awarding authorities of all contracts relating to the work in question, that there shall be no lock-out, or cause to be locked-out, employees, parties to this agreement.

Approved — GROVER A. WHALEN /s/
April 27, 1937

It will be observed that nowhere is there mention of the promised and legalized rights of the foreigners to bring in their own specialists. In addition, the contract did not provide for hire of more than a single shift of workers, an ominous omission which meant that if lagging schedules made it necessary to work more than thirty or thirty-five hours a week, this could only be done by paying time and a half or double time.

The compensating clause prohibiting jurisdictional strikes was to have slight meaning to men who were to interpret the agreement as giving them jurisdiction over everything short of the stratosphere; as permitting them to load construction with unnecessary workmen, to loaf, and to make the prohibition against more than one shift a nightmare to exhibitors and a gold mine for themselves.

But of course this necessitated first a show of power through strikes, both

grievance strikes and the jurisdictional variety outlawed by the contract. The first of these strikes was engineered by the electrical union, which had reason to feel that it enjoyed a special proprietorship in the exposition, having purchased \$20,000 Fair bonds outright and high-pressured its members into buying an additional \$100,000 worth. On May 2, 1938, its 400 workers then on the grounds walked out, leaving the lights burning (the authorities did not dare extinguish them, owing to union rules), because a General Motors road-show preview had operated momentarily with its own electrical system.

Next, some 6000 building-trades workers — virtually all on the grounds — were pulled out, to support the electricians in a fight to prohibit the New York Telephone Company from using its own employees to help drag its own cables. Under a prevailing agreement the union men already were doing 98 per cent of the telephone installation work. To take over the remainder, which could only account for \$12,000 more in pay, many times twelve thousands were lost and the dust gathered on more than forty uncompleted buildings. Exhibitors were frantic. They looked to Mayor La Guardia for relief, but nothing happened. Though Mr. Whalen previously had said the strike was outside his province, it was he who eventually settled it by dictating that the company should bow.

Next came a truckers' strike, causing another tie-up. Then the plumbers struck. It was not that they found fault with the Fair, but they thought they had better shut it down to high-pressure a wage of \$2.00 an hour from employers who elsewhere were paying \$1.80 an hour in accordance with a union vote which Business Agent Archie Henderson said was 'illegal.'

But the palm goes to the 'Fair Ground Workers Union.' That strike came to light when pickets established lines and the story filtered out that the corporation was replacing unionists with non-union

groundkeepers. In 'sympathy' the Hodcarriers, Building and Common Laborers called out their large membership and 'dissuaded' strikebreakers from entering the grounds. Again there was talk of a general strike, but this was unnecessary. The skilled mechanics could not work because the men who had the job of handing them their materials were on the picket lines.

Now what were the motives for that outbreak? It appears that there was no union organization of the groundkeepers. The hodcarriers, therefore, quietly decided to sponsor one for them and promptly called the strike when the Fair refused to fire all those who did not immediately join it. In this case Mayor La Guardia felt it advisable to appoint investigators. They reported that the union had enrolled only 172 of the 1360 groundkeepers. That ended the strike.

Interspersed among major shutdowns were countless strikes, jurisdictional and otherwise, against individual exhibitors. Fifteen window cleaners sat down at the British pavilion because one of their number had been discharged. The painters at work in the British pavilion walked out in a jurisdictional row. General Motors planned to dedicate its building with a dinner to be followed by a pageant. But the union electricians would not allow the stage hands to have charge of the lighting effects behind the stage, so the stage hands walked out, and in turn prohibited the musicians from playing.

IV

It required only a few such instances to show that something was decidedly wrong at the Fair. After such warnings, exhibitors knew better than to resist when the electricians' union held that the labor contract gave it jurisdiction over turning lights on and off and the right to rewire new equipment 'to guard against fire,' though there is evidence that this very practice has increased insurance rates.

Gerard Swope, president of the General Electric Company, declared that the union at times obstructed the use of G. E. equipment. The concern threatened to withdraw its exhibit as a consequence. 'The contractors dare not use our products because they know that local No. 3 will refuse to install them, and that costly delays and substitutions, if not actual damage and violence, will result,' he wrote Mr. Whalen in a letter which was made part of the record in the suit brought by electrical manufacturers to break an alleged local No. 3 boycott.

Indeed, in the interpretation of that labor contract little escaped A. F. of L. domination. If you agree with John Sloan, the famous painter, that the Fair's art was to be a 'chamber of horrors,' you can blame the A. F. of L.'s Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America and their affiliates. The brethren ruled that no muralists save members of their union could touch a brush at the Fair and that they should not do even a sign painter's job 'from sketches, designs, etc., unless same are made by a union member and bear the union label.' This impossible condition was modified to permit an artist to sketch designs. But, once on the grounds, such designs had to be executed solely by the union members. Even that, however, did not help. Domenico Mortellito, secretary of the Mural Artists Guild, made it clear that an artist could work on his own picture only by joining the union — an unpopular restriction which in the end left the control of his art in the hands of people who did not understand it.

Everywhere the unionists exerted this type of control. The International Photographers of the Motion Picture Industry, local No. 644, went so far as to notify six newsreel companies to cease taking pictures of the Fair until the corporation employed more union photographers.

The ferreting out of numberless new jobs overloaded exhibitors with unnecessary employees. One example: Norman S. Mackie, of the Old Masters exhibit, employed eight experienced picture hangers from the Knoedler Art Galleries to put up his priceless paintings. The delegate of an upholsterers' union promptly demanded their job. To prevent a general construction tie-up, Mr. Mackie agreed to employ four unionists whose chief function was to drive occasional nails into the wall. But the four proved a mere entering wedge, for, he says, the delegate kept insisting that there were not enough of his men on the job, and before long he was compelled to carry eleven nail drivers on the payroll at wages ranging up to \$175 a week.

As the date for the Fair's opening, April 30, 1939, appeared on the horizon, the pressure was doubled. Now exhibitors were made painfully aware of the aftereffect of the strikes. The interruptions had so upset schedules that the buildings never could be completed except through heavy payment of overtime wages.

When you have a cost-plus contract which means \$4.00 an hour for an electrician at double time, plus a minimum 21 per cent of the labor cost which goes to the contractor under the trade's code, you have a financial cancer. But, as if that were not bad enough, suppose that you, as an exhibitor, were so far behind schedule that the available labor supply was insufficient. You could not augment it with out-of-town workers. You could only allow your contractor to bribe men away from other builders by offering still higher wages.

The setup for this extra profit-taking could not have been more perfect had the airtight contract and the strikes been planned deliberately to this end. For, as most exhibitors agree, their labor relations were amicable until they had invested so much that they could not withdraw.

Stalling. More delays. Jay Downer, who had been a member of the Fair's Board of Design, told the American Society of Landscape Architects how labor's early attitude of coöperation fell away as a mist, how electrical workers, particularly, attempted to force overtime and then took the attitude of 'a tiger after his first taste of blood.' In the last few weeks, he said, many concessionaires were 'bled white'; labor became as if crazed for more and still more overtime wages, and men would not even accept work unless assured of considerable overtime pay. He recited how one concessionaire was compelled to hire seven electricians to do the work of two and still was not ready on the opening day. Mr. Downer said he chanced by that night; two of the men were taping and joining cables, while the remaining five merely looked on with amusement. It was several days before they finished. Similar incidents consumed the last spare money of many concessionaires, Mr. Downer explained.

The Riggers and Machine Movers Union had claimed the job of rigging New England's model of a clipper ship. But its members made so little progress in three weeks that the contractor had to suspend and bring in the Ship Carpenters and Nautical Riggers Union from New Bedford, Massachusetts. The local men thereupon called a strike and gave the newcomers two days to get out. Before the jurisdictional fireworks could start, the work was completed and the New Bedford men gone. Meantime, though, the pavers had walked out in an unrelated dispute, and when this was settled they still refused to apply concrete to the sides of the hole in which the ship rested because the machine movers were still cherishing a mighty huff. Not until June 20, two months after the Fair's opening, and following such threats of bombing that special guards were necessary, was it possible to pour water in the concrete pool so that the ship would appear to be afloat.

V

But it was in the foreign section that the most woe was encountered. The foreigners were especially vulnerable, owing to the fact that as diplomatic guests they were supposed to exhibit with smiles. It was their intention to have the pavilions turned over to them as mere shells so that they could apply finishing touches characteristic of their own countries. This meant many separate cost-plus contracts late in the construction period. And the unions were already angry. The foreigners were importing their own materials and their own specialists, just as the United States Government and the Fair authorities had said they could.

Take the case of France, whose deputy commissioner, Maurice Garreau-Dombasle, told me he would like to be quoted as declaring that 'unbearable' requirements and the payment of 'enormous sums' imposed by the unions increased the cost of the French pavilion by an amount in excess of \$100,000. Imported wiring had to be ripped out, he said, at costs so high that one chandelier, which was to have been a show piece, had to be abandoned. In addition, jurisdictional rows were an unending cause of grief. Men unloading marble would halt if they found a few pieces of stone in the load. Stone lifting required the employment of another full crew. When a Frenchwoman attempted to remove wrappings from a vase a union agent slapped her. You could not even unpack your own boxes. That, too, was a union job. When he brought in from France five art plasterers, whose entry was carefully in compliance with the printed instructions, the unions would not allow them to apply decorative motifs to the pavilion for the reason that they would displace Americans. Yet the fact is that at that moment the French were already employing a hundred New York plasterers.

Because the prestige of the United

States Government was behind the Fair, because France's invitation had come through diplomatic channels, M. Garreau-Dombasle's government decided to make an issue of the case. It appealed to the State Department, and the latter, aghast, had the Labor Department send a conciliator to New York. But in vain. The unions overpowered the laws which had guaranteed the French workmen's entry. The A. F. of L. national headquarters tried to reason with the local leaders, but unsuccessfully. Mr. Whalen used his powers of persuasion. But to no avail. Not until two months had passed was a compromise evolved. This was the solution: that in addition to the hundred Americans already employed France should hire five more unionists to loaf, and to collect overtime whenever the foreigners labored for more than six hours.

As a contrast to the treatment accorded France in America, M. Garreau-Dombasle told me that when the 1937 Paris exposition was tied up by a general strike the French unions did not wish to inconvenience their country's guests, and therefore permitted the American exhibit to be completed solely by British and Belgian labor.

To give a national character to their building, the Rumanians conceived the idea of facing it with Rumanian marble. But the stone was first held up at the docks because the unions contended that polishing and cutting it abroad had deprived Americans of jobs. Then, when at last the entry was granted, one crew of unionists had to be employed to load the material into dockside trucks at wages ranging from \$15 to \$17.50 a day, although sometimes the actual labor required no more than a couple of hours. At the Fair grounds another similar crew unloaded the marble, while a third carried it to the building, with corresponding time to spare. At this point the Rumanians had intended to use their own marble-setters, but Americans went to work instead, and so slowly that the bosses urged them to more speed. This

aggravated matters; additional time was lost in argument. After a week the work had to be torn down as unsatisfactory. Now the union decided it would allow the foreigners to do their own job, but on condition that two Americans additionally be paid for each foreigner who held a trowel. Since the Americans insisted on collecting overtime whenever a Rumanian worked long, theirs proved a congenial occupation at a reported wage of from \$200 to \$400 a week. By the time the marble-setting became an interior job the union agents had so loaded the payroll that the laborers had difficulty stepping over the sitters. In exasperation the supervising engineer laid them all off, apparently on the pretext that the Rumanians were going to quit too. When the Americans protested, he lined up his foreigners behind him and threatened to start a war on the spot unless the Americans cleared out. They did. After that scene work was done secretly behind locked doors, even though a general strike was threatened when electricians, reporting the next day, discovered that marble had been laid during their absence.

The strike did not materialize, but the Rumanian Government paid a whopping bill. It had to pay approximately \$900 for the two-hour job of moving a small statue. I have seen its electrical maintenance bill, which for three months totaled \$3057.79.

Some of the nations preferred to pay up rather than protest. In this category are Japan, Britain, and Russia. Working on the Russian building were electricians who boasted that they collected \$300 a week. Though some commissioners presented docile faces, their countries quickly received information which has resulted in bitter denunciation.

When Belgium's pavilion was dedicated, Dr. Joseph Gevaert, its high commissioner, apologized because electrical equipment was not complete, 'due to unforeseen circumstances.' Shortly thereafter, however, the *De'pêche Coloni-*

ale Belgeet l'Essor Colonial et Maritime stated that Belgium had become the unwilling victim of American 'gangster methods' because it refused to meet demands which, presented by the electricians an hour before the pavilion's dedication, would have added \$34,000 to its cost. The article continued: —

'Result: Electrical current was cut off from the pavilions of Belgium and the Congo. Owing to a small auxiliary dynamo, light was assured nevertheless for the first day, but during the night parts of the motor disappeared mysteriously.'

The article was entitled 'The Beauties of American Hospitality.'

The *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* interviewed a Dutch specialist who recited in detail how eight American unionists whiled away eight hours placing a tank which three Dutchmen could have handled in thirty minutes. The Americans, he said, deliberately pushed the tank out of position, and when the Dutch boss became so aggravated as to reach for a rope the men were supposed to be pulling, he had to be restrained by Professor Rosse, the Netherlands architect, to avoid a brawl.

The Dutchman added that his crew of American carpenters, painters, electricians, iron workers, case openers, and cleaners had a habit of disappearing, four at a time, and 'I find them resting, sometimes asleep, or somewhere strolling in the grounds. . . . Occasionally a stranger,' he continued, 'turns up. Asked what his business is, he tells me he is coming to see that his men are not working too hard. Then there's the painters' delegate who, after fifteen minutes of work, took an hour's rest. "Take it easy," he used to say.'

Holland's most important exhibit was a mail-sorting machine, a mechanical miracle as big as a newspaper printing press and so intricate that none except engineers supplied by the manufacturer could assemble it. Now the Dutch are a shrewd lot, and, as explained to me by Dr. Neil Van Aken, executive secretary

of their participation committee, they had stipulated in their contract with the Fair corporation that they should be permitted to use their own labor, even though the law already gave them this right. Yet, two weeks after the six Dutch engineers had begun putting together the forty-two tons of parts, the Millwright and Machinery Erectors Union swooped down, demanding the job under threat of a strike. Mr. Whalen could only say, 'Sorry.' Even when the Dutch Government sent Mr. Whalen a message pointing out that relief must be had within forty-eight hours if the Fair corporation was to escape responsibility for delay and damages, Mr. Whalen could only express regret.

The only possible arrangement was for Holland to turn the job over to men ignorant of the mechanism, with Dutchmen beside them reading the blueprints and having their vocal explanations translated, as nearly as possible indicating each step in sign language. Eventually, the Americans stood by while the Dutchmen did most of the work. But the required overtime, Dr. Van Aken said, raised assembling costs \$7000 over the original estimates.

Dr. Van Aken was emphatic in stating that this sort of thing was typical of Holland's entire construction at the Fair. 'Electric cables were cut,' he told me. 'The wrong kind of connections were put in so that the jobs had to be done over.' The cost of the Netherlands pavilion rose more than \$75,000 above the appropriation. Its cost for the season was double the original \$500,000 budget.

With the Fair finally opened, the unions still did not ease up. Electrical 'maintenance' contracts were hung so tightly around the necks of exhibitors, both foreign and domestic, that they were never rid of them. The New York Zoölogical Society's representative protested that he was served with a demand to pay \$30 a day maintenance for his little exhibit, but, by forming a united front with three others, he was able to

get part-time service at \$70 a month. Though he paid, however, he said he never saw the electrician. Arkansas threatened to quit because the Motion Picture Operators Union demanded that one of its members be employed at \$150 a week to watch its amateur-type automatic projector unreel a travelogue. Foreigners were not permitted to work in their own governments' restaurants unless they paid union dues.

Amid the complaints there arose jokes such as Americans always evolve to comfort themselves in trying situations. One was that the New York Zoölogical Society's electric eel had been compelled to join the electricians' union. But when a *New York Times* reporter repeated the joke to Dr. Roderick MacDonald, manager of the Society's exhibit, the latter replied that too much labor trouble really did centre on the eel for it to be humorous to him. He pointed out that about fifteen minutes before the fish was supposed to use its own electricity to light a series of flares which were to begin a parade formally opening the amusement area, one of the Fair's electrical foremen ran up to demand immediate replacement of the wire which had been rigged to assist the eel. He said, 'The people who made it [the wire] do not employ men who belong to our union.'

After the foreman's crew had installed new equipment amid painful delays, Dr. MacDonald was told: 'You'll never use that wire again.'

'We found out what the man meant,' he added, 'when we discovered that every socket on our wire had been destroyed.'

VI

It was inevitable that there should be a blowup. It is logical, too, that Dr. Van Aken should have touched off the powder, because, besides his Dutch connections, he was president of the Foreign Commissioners' Club, at whose sessions he heard the complaints of other commis-

His public statement appeared in the New York press on June 8, 1939. France then followed with its complaint. Venezuela already was in a tempest. Portions of the Rumanian trouble leaked out. The *New York Times* remarked in a news article that it had no difficulty finding 'a dozen' foreign commissioners who 'were quick to admit privately their agreement with all he [Dr. Van Aken] said.' Then came amusement-area protests, and protests from the different states. Maine's manager said his state's work would have been done in half the time and at half the cost at home. Florida protested that its costs were a third above estimates.

Meantime Justice Salvatore A. Cotillo, of the New York Supreme Court, in an open letter called the attention of Governor Lehman, the United States Commissioner, Mayor La Guardia, and Mr. Whalen to the Italian exhibit, where strikers had 'worked damage to the restaurants, cut up the seats, cut off the electrical power.' He stated that Italy's strife had been 'duplicated' in the Russian, Belgian, French, English, and other pavilions. He demanded reform.

The *New York Times* demanded editorially that the city order a public inquiry, adding that failure to do so was 'not good for the reputation of the city or the country.'

What happened? Dr. Van Aken, the chief complainant, received anonymous telephone calls threatening him unless he 'kept his mouth shut.' 'It has been very disconcerting to my wife,' he told me. 'You know womenfolk. They would call me in the middle of the night, get me out of bed, and Mrs. Van Aken would say: "Oh, Neil, what will happen to us?"'

Investigators from a state legislative committee called on Dr. Van Aken in the summer, listened to his story, and have not been heard from since. Mayor La Guardia preserved silence. Governor Lehman merely acknowledged Justice Cotillo's letter. Theodore Hayes, the

federal representative at the Fair, remarked to the press that the foreigners were being treated outrageously.

Mr. Whalen explained to the *New York Times* that 'we have had only the usual amount of labor problems that any project such as this would have' and that '*many of these were caused by jurisdictional disputes over which we had no control.*' The italics are mine, for let it be remembered that the A. F. of L. contract with the Fair corporation specifically prohibited such disputes.

Second, in the face of all the accumulated evidence, he said, 'We know of no conditions that would justify such a statement as that attributed to Dr. Van Aken.'

Third, on June 10, the day after he had been prodded by the *Times*, he began an 'inquiry,' which consisted of sending wires to representatives of all nations asking whether their 'governments' had authorized Dr. Van Aken to issue public statements in their behalf. Dr. Van Aken never had intimated he spoke officially for any government, but only on information he had gained as president of the Foreign Commissioners' Club. Consequently, not even colleagues who had urged him to protest could reply that their governments had designated him to do so.

Fourth, when commissioners later met with Mr. Whalen, and men such as Dr. Lopez, the Venezuelan, arose to insist that they could not return in 1940 unless labor abuses were ended, he reversed his position. On September 13 he promised 'greater coöperation than was possible this year,' and pleaded that 'we have learned our weaknesses and shall profit by our experience.' And then, as he hurried to Europe to try to appease the International Bureau of Expositions for failure to comply with its regulations, he insisted that he could promise better behavior from the unions if the nations would only return. He admitted, however, that none of the labor leaders had pledged their coöperation to this end.

VII

The foregoing, of course, does not take account of all the labor abuses, for that would require a book. It does, however, show in general the nature of what has occurred, and from the labor standpoint the reason is not difficult to comprehend. As Bert Kirkman, president of the electricians, declared in a *Times* interview, there was a demand that the men should benefit from 'good times' because they 'went through hell during the depression years.'

From the standpoint of others in responsible positions, the reason why the abuses were permitted must remain more remote. As long as they stopped short of public appeal, it is not enough to say that the national leaders of the A. F. of L. and the Fair authorities did all they could to prevent the abuses. They only argued privately and in vain with the labor agents to ease their oppression.

Mayor La Guardia, who has had the political support of the unions, would have gained in stature by ordering the investigation requested by the *Times*. The whole labor movement would have benefited from the cleansing which would have resulted had President William Green of the A. F. of L. publicly denounced the scandal. Although at this writing the Justice Department is preparing to go before a grand jury with complaints about the New York electrical union's general policies, all of which were reflected at the Fair, it would seem that the Federal Government could have done more than it did, especially when it was able to prevent labor trouble at its own exhibit merely by declaring it would not tolerate strikes. To be sure, Fair corporation officials have had hot sessions with the building council leaders, both over general abuses and over the rule against more than one shift of workers. But is that enough?

There has been no big complaint about labor at the San Francisco Fair. Ac-

cording to Dr. Van Aken, the directors there simply asserted they did not want an exposition unless they obtained in advance a guarantee that the unions would not interfere once a building was given over to an exhibitor. So they got that guarantee and there was no trouble over foreign specialists.

Why did not the New York directors get a similar agreement? Why did they permit the foreigners to expect the privileges of such an agreement when the management already had signed its ironclad A. F. of L. contract? No matter what the original circumstances might have been, why was not something done to seek relief when the labor demands became unreasonable? Why did the authorities not tell the unions there would be no fair unless the latter agreed to permit the hire of more than a single shift of workers? Some protections at least might have been evolved on that point. But as the Building Trades Employers Association pointed out in its publication, *News and Opinion*, the Fair corporation at the outset rejected any suggestion that an experienced builder be appointed to its board to assist in framing precautions against such 'extreme' labor demands. Why was he not wanted? It had Harry Van Arsdale, the power behind the electrical No. 3, as chairman of its advisory subcommittee on building and construction trades labor relations.

Such stupidity is inconceivable in an organization astute and imaginative enough to conceive the World of Tomorrow.

This being the case, you might argue that labor actually bought the Fair. Dr. Van Aken raised that point by recalling the purchase of Fair bonds by the electricians' union. Again, long before the A. F. of L. contract was made public, the *New York Times* as early as May 4, 1938, declared in a news report that 'it is said' the electricians had been given a monopoly in consideration of these purchases. On the other hand, \$120,000, the

price the electricians had paid, would scarcely be a sufficient price for the license they took.

So you come to a dead end of rationalization.

When I myself reached this dead end I thought it best to go direct to the Fair corporation. At its press relations office I outlined my perplexities. I asked for an interview with someone who, in Mr. Whalen's absence, might say a word in the corporation's defense. The man, I was told, was Commander Howard A. Flanigan, executive vice president. My message was taken to him. His reply, as relayed to me, was simply this: that he would not see me for the purpose of discussing anything about labor policies; and that no one else connected with the Fair would be allowed to speak on the subject.

I interpret this to mean that no official of the Fair can be suspected of taking sides at a time when negotiations for next year are going forward. However, this very silence permits of one more possible answer to the questions.

It is that when the Fair was in its initial stage some one or more of its managers neglected to see to it that the Fair should be protected, and when the abuses became serious it was too late to make amends. By the time labor was making excruciating demands the exhibitors who clamored for relief had millions invested.

If you want to accept this explanation, the authorities were then confronted with two possible courses. If they went on, attempting vainly and quietly to placate labor, they at least could open the Fair and hope the losses would not be too crushing. If they called labor's hand, its tsars might irreparably tie up the entire show for a total loss. The authorities, thus between the devil and the deep sea, chose what they believed to be the lesser evil.

I cannot guarantee that this is the explanation. What is your opinion?

NATCHEZ WAS A LADY

BY DAVID L. COHN

DEEP SNOW PLANTATION
IVANHOE, MISSISSIPPI

DEAR ELISAVETA ANDRIEVNA:—

I have just been visiting a town that you must see — Natchez. It is the fragile, frozen embodiment of a dream that ended long ago on bloody battlefields, even if the Chamber of Commerce does call it 'the place where the Old South meets the New.' The place, so to speak, where any moonlight night along the vine-embowered Woodville road one may expect to find Henry Ford taking Varina Howell Davis out for a ride in his new V-8.

Last week was a poor time for me to go anywhere, but I went. Cotton is coming in, and this is the time of year for all good men to come to the aid of the crop. But the war got on my nerves. It was impossible to resist the morbid fascination of hearing transoceanic voices chanting details of the doom of their own civilization. When the Athenian ships went to the bottom off Syracuse centuries ago, only the wine-dark sea and the enemy heard the cries of the drowning sailors with whose bodies a golden civilization perished. It remained for later historians to record the events: 'Thus ended the third year of the Peloponnesian war, of which Thucydides was the historian.' But now, when H.M.S. *Courageous* is torpedoed at afternoon in the North Sea, English voices come into my Deer Creek home at evening telling the age-old, ever-new story of man's dying, and his heroism in the face of death.

It is one thing, however agonizing, to read history after the event. It is quite another thing, and infinitely more harrowing, to hear it described as it is being made — especially the kind of history we are making. For after all, although I am an inheritor of Greek civilization and am deeply moved when, twenty-five centuries later, I read the mournful record of its passing, I comfort myself with the reflection that this occurred far away and long ago. But these are *my* times; I am part of modern civilization; and voices come out of the air foretelling its doom.

I was deeply disturbed, but could not move from my radio chair. The impulse to go away was furnished by Lige, our gardener. He had hung around my room while Hitler was speaking from Danzig. He has, in fact, a great admiration for Hitler without quite knowing why. On this occasion he was puzzled. 'Mr. Dave,' he asked, 'if dat man is de kang like folks says he is, why can't he chop people's heads off if dey frets him?' He continued without waiting for a reply: 'How come he call hisself de fearer? If he de kang, what he got to be skeered of?' I didn't try to answer Lige's questions. I merely said, 'Put some gas in the car. I'm going away for a few days.'

That, my dear, is how and why I went to Natchez last week. It isn't the first time I have gone there in search of peace and found it. Natchez, wrapped in dreams, has not for years been either of the world or of the country of

which physically it is a part. It has moved to the spirit ditties of no tone amid the sounding automobile horns of a new time. On my previous visit it struck me in this wise: 'Natchez is in the world but not of it. People walk in its streets, boats move on its river, newspapers are printed and read, and business is transacted. It is cluttered with the paraphernalia of contemporaneity; the illusion of newness hovers about its bowed head. But its eyes are cast downward as are the eyes of the Virgin Mary in a *Pietà*. Its eardrums were shattered at Sumter, its hands stilled at Appomattox.'

Today much is changed in Natchez. The Old South is so busy meeting the New it is difficult to tell where the one begins and the other ends, just as at great distances from the Mississippi's mouth the sea is stained yellow, and for all the surge and thunder of the ocean one still seems to be on the bosom of the great river. Hordes of Baptists have poured into town to work in the newly opened factories, but the small Episcopalian congregation continues to commune calmly with God on Sundays, serene in the belief that, although there may be many roads to Heaven, Southern gentlemen and their ladies proceed only by way of the Episcopalian road. New-comers arrive in town, prepare to spend their lives there, and are graciously received by the old inhabitants, but they and their children's children will be regarded as strangers by the Quality. And the Quality themselves, impoverished, long remote from contact with the brawling world, receive guests and visitors now by the thousands, only to be untouched by them in the end; to go back to their gardens, their dreams, and their whiskey (when they can get it) after the barbarian horde has vanished in a cloud of automobile dust. For Natchez is now a Tourist Town; one of the sights of America; 'quaint and romantic' in the eyes of Northern visitors; its life the spit and image of that

life described by Margaret Mitchell, the impassioned Baedeker of the Old South, in *Gone with the Wind*.

In the 1840's, Natchez, possessing more millionaires than any other town in America, was also one of the most civilized cities in the country. It was a seat of a planter civilization which H. L. Mencken, an expert heaver of rotten eggs at the South, has called 'one of manifold excellencies — perhaps the best the Western Hemisphere has ever seen — undoubtedly the best that these States have seen.' On the high bluffs of Natchez, planters built great homes, filled them with Chippendale and Sheraton, old silver, rare rugs, and bookshelves lined with the classics. In their stables stood blooded riding horses and horses for numerous carriages. At their door flowed the Mississippi, on whose bosom moved the palatial boats that took the planter's cotton and the planter's family to New Orleans, where they visited friends, bought the latest dresses imported from France, the current English books and magazines, and a bountiful supply of wines and *pâtés*. Across the river from their bluff-built homes lay their Louisiana plantations, where black slaves and white overseers produced the cotton clamorously demanded by a growing world in the throes of the Industrial Revolution. It was in these homes and against this background that Natchez planters received visitors as diverse and distinguished as Aaron Burr and John James Audubon, who lingered to teach painting and dancing at Jefferson Military College; and it was in such homes that, whenever they saddled their horses and prepared for the long ride to Nashville over the Natchez Trace, they made their peace with God and their wills, for no man knew when he rode out into the wilderness whether he would return.

And it was here, too, that the planters of Natchez added their voices to the planter voices in Congress which had maintained the dominance of an agrarian

civilization against an upsurging industrialization from the founding of the republic until 1861. 'With the collapse of the most articulate agricultural group that has ever existed in the United States,' says the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 'business interests entered upon a period of almost unchallenged control of the federal government and most of the state governments. Far from being hindered by government regulation, they received at the hands of the central and local governments every favor they desired. . . . What could not be obtained by fair means was frequently obtained unfairly.' And ever since the collapse of the planter group, it might have been added, the farmer has been the Man with the Woe, the farm problem the constant x in the equation of our national life.

These planters, moreover, were deeply under the spell of *noblesse oblige*; if they enjoyed privileges, they shouldered responsibilities. But now for many years, under another name, we have been begging our great industrial leaders to practise *noblesse oblige* as 'social responsibility in business.'

In 1861-1865 all this was destroyed. The planters were crushed or killed; their slaves were flown; their stock was dead, their lands grown up in weeds. (Thomas Dabney, a proud, seventy-year-old, once-great Mississippi landowner, washed his family's clothes for years after the Civil War.) Other sections of the South rose from the ashes, but in Natchez the ashes became a thin soil in which the shattered population nurtured pale flowers reminiscent of those that had blown so vigorously in their gardens of the past.

It does not detract from the gallantry of the gentlemen of the post-bellum South to say that their women were often their superiors in energy and business acumen. Many a war-broken Southern family owed its resuscitation to the valor of its women, and this is

largely true of the recent rise of Natchez. Here is a town that a few years ago had neither agriculture nor industry nor amassed riches. People lived surrounded by rare furniture and tax collector's bills; their cupboards were filled with old silver and little to eat. But the town had a Past — a Past that was, if you will, romantic. Over its ramparts had flown the flags of France, of Spain, of England, of the United States, the Confederacy, and the United States again. And long before the white man came there had been the Natchez Indians.

America, as befits a country coming to maturity, has suddenly become conscious of its past. It was all very well for porcelain-fragile Daughters of the Confederacy in Natchez to live on tea and crumpets and spend their time puttering with the memoirs of their dead youth in dusty attics. But their daughters wanted more. Even Southern women, for all that they like to hear false rhymes recited in the moonlight, have been known to hanker after the fleshpots of Chanel copyists. But how to get the clothes so alluringly described in *Vogue*? How even to get enough money for a week in near-by New Orleans? Natchez had nothing to sell but its Past. Then, concluded Katherine Balfour Miller, we'll sell the last thing that we have left of our Past: the Past itself.

Mrs. Miller organized what she called The Garden Pilgrimage, and through letters, circulars, and lectures invited America to visit Natchez. America accepted the invitation. The national interest in gardening is great; the national interest in America's past is high. Natchez promised old gardens, magnificent ante-bellum homes, spiritual-singing Negroes, the Mississippi River, mint juleps, magnolias, moonlight on the levee, fried chicken, and the Quality receiving their paying guests clad in hoopskirts, with Cape jessamines in their hair. All this spelled Romance to the people of the corn and wheat states, and the grimy industrial Northeast; it was

the stuff of which Hollywood dreams are made; and the savor of seeing would be spiced with that touch of condescension which always lingers in the minds of the conquerors after however long a period.

So hordes of visitors with money in their pockets began to come each spring to Natchez. Even Massachusetts took a gingerly look and ever afterward sensed the disturbing aroma of magnolias blowing across Walden Pond. But both the guests and the hosts were to receive a shock. The gardens of Natchez were nothing to brag about because it had not been able to keep them up. There were finer ones, perhaps, in Mobile and the North. Everything else that was promised was, however, delivered in overflowing abundance, and even the most critical visitor was content. It was the Quality who were to be severely shocked. They had never rubbed shoulders with America, and consequently, when the guests came from afar, the Quality let them roam all over the houses filled with priceless antiques, exerting no more vigilance than that employed by white-coated old Uncle Tobe, as, laden with chill silver goblets of mint juleps, he chased strange white gentlemen around the whatnots. The owners of these houses had never heard of the American passion for souvenir grabbing, and there was naturally some dismay when it was found that great-grandfather's copy of Pliny, the daguerreotype of grandmother as a child, and odd bits of silver had walked out with the guests.

At the next Pilgrimage, the rooms of the houses were roped off. 'This old furniture is so fragile,' explained a hoopskirted lady to a delegation representing the Culture Club of Tomahawk, Kansas.

Year after year the Pilgrimage increases in numbers, and out of the fees charged visitors the owners of old homes have been able to repair the chimneys, stop leaks in the roofs, build trellises in the gardens, and even pay part of the

taxes. When the tourists are in town, hotels flourish; liquor sales (in a dry state) increase; rooms in town are rented; and some of the Negro population find employment singing spirituals to the descendants of those Yankees who, as they are taught, long ago fought and licked the white folks. Thousands of visitors spend enough money in a few weeks to help the town along for a large part of the year, and now, whatever the month, there are always a few strangers in Natchez come to see the promised Romance. Thus it has a certain prosperity based upon the past of the Quality. But it has recently achieved a new and different prosperity based upon the present of ordinary folk.

Out in the hills and down in the bottoms near Natchez, there is a large population of poor whites and Negroes. If the soil on which they live is too thin to grow much cotton, it is rich enough on which to produce children. (There is no more logical relationship between the fertility of the soil on which a people live and the fertility of the people themselves than there is — despite the American legend — between love and marriage.) Child growing is consequently one of the major industries of Adams and adjoining counties.

Up North there is abundant capital clamoring for employment and a population rapidly becoming static. The true marriage of capital and labor produces — if not happiness, truth, and beauty — factories. And the mills have come to Natchez to employ the labor of a people who used their spare time (when not out rabbit hunting) producing children. Today they toil in a great rubber factory making tires and other things of rubber that comes by water from Malaysia to New Orleans and up the river. They get good wages — prodigious wages for Natchez. They have more money in their pockets than they ever dreamed of having. The result is that they wear shoes every day in the week; eat sardines

whenever they please; go to the picture show; drink store-bought whiskey; and whoop up the old-time religion on Sundays. Others work in a new shirt factory and — an unwonted novelty for Southern toilers — find it possible to buy some of the shirts they make. The result of all this is that Natchez has new sources of revenue, new life, new people, and new business in the police court. And if the Quality and the people do not fraternize, they are at one in that contented dream-drowsy world whose foundation is the satisfied stomach.

But, for all this, Natchez will never be part of the world in which it lives. It is not only that everywhere on earth palpable and subtle differences set Southerners and Northerners apart; it is also that Natchez lives with its dead. A few miles from the town there is a singularly ugly and huge ante-bellum house — 'Longwood.' It has never been completed. In 1858 a rich and cultured planter (his library contained ten thousand volumes), by the name of Dr. Nutt, employed a Philadelphia architect to construct this house. The architect was told by his client to hire artisans in Cincinnati and bring them down river to Natchez, where they would be assisted by some of Dr. Nutt's twenty-five hundred slaves. He went to work on Longwood, while the planter and his wife left for Europe to buy linens in Ireland, silver in England, paintings and furniture in France, marbles in Italy. By the time the Civil War began, the framework, the roof, and the sides of the house had been completed. Then the artisans went home to fight for the North; the architect returned to Philadelphia; the slaves ran away; most of the shipments made by Dr. Nutt from Europe were seized by the enemy.

In Natchez this house still stands today. The cypress scaffolding reaching from the unfinished first floor to the unfinished fourth floor remains where it was placed in 1861; paintbrushes are frozen in paint long since solidified; ham-

mers, nails, overalls, and saws lie where they were dropped seventy-five years ago. In the basement — designed to be a billiard and hunting room — lives the impoverished, elderly grandson of Dr. Nutt, amid eternal dampness, pools of shadow, and the huge, dark, ancient furniture. Outside in the grounds that were to have been a stately garden grows a matted jungle of trees and vines, sanctuary to snakes, rabbits, owls, and mockingbirds. At the rear of the house, slave quarters rise white in the moonlight.

Here, my dear, is the place where you may see and feel the Civil War. The spectacle of this half-completed house is a far more poignant reminder of the tragedy of that war than the war-burned houses of the Southern states, just as a legless, blinded veteran of the last World War is a more poignant reminder of its tragedy than the neatly tended graves of the dead at Arlington. In this house you note how the old South came suddenly to an end; how an avalanche poured down upon it, stopping all work and driving away the workmen, yet preserving the frame for a life beyond life, as Vesuvius destroyed and perpetuated Pompeii. And it is here, for twenty-five cents admission, that visitors come to look upon the old South in the form of this ghostly home and the person of its lonely tenant. They come to look, to murmur 'How quaint,' 'How Southern,' and go rolling away in their cars. But it is at Longwood that the soul of Natchez lies buried.

The landscape in and around Natchez is starred with ante-bellum homes to the number of thirty or forty. They are intact, and occupied sometimes by members of the families who built them, sometimes by others. There are so many, indeed, that when the ladies of the Garden Club of Virginia — a group who en masse achieve the remarkable effect of seeming to move in Panathenaic procession — visited Natchez they were gracious enough to say they could not be-

lieve their own eyes. Among these homes, high on a bluff, stands 'The Briers,' the residence of an uncle of Miss Varina Howell, who married Mr. Jefferson Davis there. The home stands, and Miss Howell's soul goes marching on. It is from her spiritual presence, perhaps, that Mrs. Miller and the other women of Natchez derived the inspiration to be *up and doing, and with much intelligence* in the order of their work.

Here I must tell you this: it is part of the American legend that, while Southern belles are gifted with charm and allure and move sometimes to the *music of a femininity almost unbearably sweet* to masculine ears, they yet lack shrewdness in the sense that, say, the women of Boston are shrewd. Let's see.

When Varina Howell was a beautiful girl of seventeen, she was a guest at 'The Diamond Place,' a plantation house near Vicksburg. One day a handsome horseman rode up to the house, dismounted, exchanged a few words with Miss Howell, gave her a letter to be handed to her host, and rode away. A little later she wrote her mother of the impression made upon her by the fleeting rider:—

Today Uncle Joe sent by his younger brother (did you know he had one?) an urgent invitation for me to go at once to 'The Hurricane.' I do not know whether this Mr. Jefferson Davis is young or old. [He was thirty-six at the time.] He looks both at times; but I believe he is old, for from what I hear he is only two years younger than you are. He impresses me as a remarkable kind of man, but of uncertain temper, and has a way of taking for granted that everybody agrees with him when he expresses an opinion, which offends me; yet he is most agreeable and has a peculiarly sweet voice and a winning manner of asserting himself. The fact is, he is the kind of person I should expect to rescue one from a mad dog at any risk, but to insist upon a stoical indifference to the fright afterward. I do not think that I shall ever like him as I do his younger brother Joe. Would you believe it, he is refined and cultivated, and yet he is a Democrat.

These were the first impressions made upon a young girl by the man who was to become her husband and the President of the Confederacy. History has since confirmed them in every particular, without, however, expressing itself so trenchantly and charmingly. Southern belle, indeed!

Natchez is not, as you might imagine, all moonlight, Quality, and ante-bellum houses. It is also Negroes. While I was there this time I looked up my old friend Santa Claus, who is inseparably part of my memories of the town. My first meeting with him a few years ago was a triumph of Southern hospitality.

I had heard a great deal about Santa Claus from Judge Patterson, who felt that we might be kindred spirits, but, alas, he could not be found. One day I was seated in the Judge's court while he was trying a colored lady for slapping another lady in the face with a lighted lamp, when the Judge interrupted the trial to say to me, 'There he is.' I turned to the door, and there stood Santa Claus, ashen with fright, flanked by two policemen. (Southern hospitality had decreed that the local constabulary be sent in search of him so that we might meet.) He looked simultaneously at me, concluding that, since I was a strange white man seated in court but not on trial, I must be Uncle Sam's Law, and in any case you can never tell what white folks are up to. I quickly rescued him from the police and assured him I was not the Law, and we became firm friends.

He is a gray-haired man of about sixty, with pork-chop lips, popeyes, and an irresistible smile. He is one of the few people in town who know that his real name is Green Smith; to all Natchez he is Santa Claus, and it was as Santa Claus that he emerged triumphant from his only encounter with the law.

For years he had gone about the streets of Natchez selling roasted peanuts; for

years the children of Natchez had seen his infectious smile and heard him cry: 'Hot pinders! Roasted pinders! Get 'em red-hot. Here come ole Santa Claus. Chillun, here's ole Santa Claus.' Once, however, he got ambitious and opened a hamburger stand. But business was poor. 'So,' he told me, 'I thought I'd sell jes' a little whiskey. I sold a pint to a boy w'at's at de Jefferson Millinery College; he got drunk, and de commander put de Law on me. Dey arrested me and put me in jail. W'en my trial was over, de Jedge he says, "Green Smith, stand up." I stood up. Den he say, "It is de order of de Cote dat you are to pay a fine of three hundred dollars and serve sixty days in de county jail." I say, "Suh?" He say, "You ain't deaf. You heerd me." Well, my white folks got me out on bail because I had 'pealed, an' I went back to selling pinders. All de white ladies and dey chillun knows me. So w'en a white lady stop to buy pinders I say, "Lady, please m'am, gimme a little something to pay twarge my fine." So de ladies dey gimme dimes an' quarters and sometimes fo'-bit pieces, and dat way I paid my fine and kep' out de jailhouse.'

Santa Claus grinned complacently, and well he might. Where else, my dear, save in Natchez or in the lower South, could a convicted criminal go out on the streets and in a few weeks take up enough

money by passing the hat to pay his fine? He is, I'm happy to tell you, doing well these days. The pinder business is good because of all the strangers in town, while Sweetheart, his wife, has more washing and ironing for the white folks than she can do. Sometimes Santa Claus has to help her at night when he is not attending meetings of the Independent Brothers of Charity, or serving as deacon of the Old Jerusalem Baptist Church out on the Woodville road. And I am glad that when I drove reluctantly away from Natchez my route took me past this church, where Santa Claus, his brethren and sisters, were gathered. I stopped for a little while under a persimmon tree to hear the singing that came through the open windows:—

'De blood done sot me free,
De blood done sot me free,
Oh, don't you see what de blood done done,
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
De blood done sot me free.'

Off in the west the darkness was stabbed every little while by the flashing of lighthouse beacons above the Mississippi. There on its bluffs stood Natchez. What shall set it free, I wondered. Then I released my brakes and rolled onward into the soft night over the flat plain that leads to New Orleans, dreaming by its river.

Affectionately,

DAVID

THE NATION CHALLENGES THE SCHOOLS

BY DEAN HENRY W. HOLMES

I

If this article does not tempt the radicals to denounce me as an educational Fascist and the conservatives to reject me as a starry-eyed liberal, it will disappoint my hopes.

My argument, if it receives any attention, will affront the conservatives who condemn the public schools for not teaching more Latin and mathematics, it will offend the radicals who want teachers to build a new social order and organize in affiliation with labor unions, and it will surely arouse the scorn of those who insist that teachers are born, anyway, and ought to be full of their subjects and stop fussing about juvenile delinquency or the fate of the nation.

The gist of my contention is that public education has become a national interest in a radically new sense; that it must therefore be taken far more seriously and studied far more carefully and supported far more fully than ever in the world before; and that the development of professional personnel for the schools and the advancement of professional knowledge in education through the universities is of the essence. I shall maintain that, if these things are so, a considerable part of current educational controversy is fiddling while Rome burns; and I shall be under obligation to discuss briefly a few of the issues that seem to me significant in the premises.

Among the people Wodehouse calls 'the gently nurtured,' to keep an educa-

tional discussion on the plane of national policy is pretty difficult. There are familiar phrases which show where the ice begins to crack: 'Well, when I went to school . . . ' 'We had one professor in college who . . . ' 'My nephew tells me that in his school they . . . ' Then it becomes impossible, or discourteous, to talk about the youth problem in America, or federal support for public education, or vocational training in secondary schools. And among teachers, especially those who remain unspotted by professional training, there is an easy descent toward special pleading: if the colleges would only insist on more Latin, or give up Latin altogether, or grant credit for commercial subjects; if the school committee would only change the salary schedule, or fire the superintendent . . . Then it becomes a flight into the remote and academic to point to the educational effects of changes in population or the problems imposed on the schools by the depression. I am not asserting that the larger issues of educational policy are never discussed at dinner tables; and I know how often and how awesomely they are discussed at professional meetings. I am saying only that they are not yet the topics in education we take up naturally or gladly or even keep in the back of our minds when we are talking about our own educational business, whether as laymen or as teachers.

There are reasons for this — among

them the heaviness of much that is said and written about the really important problems in education. I dismiss the point that human beings have a natural and winsome tendency to escape into trivialities, like the cabinet ministers in Shaw's *Apple Cart*: that is something we have a right to be thankful for — at least on occasion. What concerns me is that the facts and ideas which ought to form a common background for talk about education must so often be introduced by conversational forced feeding. And of course when issues are not understood, and conflicts over points of view remain hidden in the books of the authorities, there is little basis for sound public criticism of educational practice.

I could give chapter and verse for the contention that the journalists and the educators of this country have a mutual obligation to each other which they have only begun to discharge. I could also point to earnest efforts on the part of both sides to come together — the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association, for example, is a notable effort on the part of the educators. It would be absurd, of course, to hope or wish that the technicalities of education should become the coin of everyday conversation. What we have the right to hope for is a better public understanding of what really matters.

Some things matter which could at best be merely catalogued in such an article as this, and I shall attempt no Homeric listing of the educational ships of state. I must speak, however, of a very few things which people will have to stir themselves about before long but which I can here approach only with a sort of wistful hog-calling.

The first and most important of these is the equalization of educational opportunity in the United States. It is an issue so pressing, so momentous for our common life, that people ought to be gossiping about it on the street corners, wondering whether the President will call a special session of the Congress to deal

with it. The fact, of course, is that not one in a thousand can name a single bill of the many that have been presented in the national legislature for federal aid to schools.

If anyone supposes that equalizing educational opportunity means getting every boy and girl into college, let him put aside that quite unfounded fear. The word 'equalization' has obscured the problem it was meant to define. The very heart of the matter is that we ought not to give all young people the same education — not in amount, nor in kind, nor in result. Let the radicals rage at this, if they will; and let them quote President Hutchins to the contrary: it is a conclusion no competent psychologist, sociologist, or political scientist will question, and every teacher and school officer will agree that it is based on facts which appear with commanding authority in the work of the schools.

There are, in short, diversities of gifts. Yet the youth of America must be offered an education which is equal in the sense that it is adequate (as adequate as we know how to make it) to each individual's need as a citizen in a democracy — in *this* democracy. Let the words carry with them every justifiable implication concerning the individual's responsibility for earning a living, the need for social justice, the conservation of natural resources, and the defeat of Mayor Hague. The point is that no one can possibly say for the country as a whole that we have enough education, sufficiently diversified in character but unified in aim and spirit, to be actually productive of those outcomes in social competence which schools can produce, do now in favored spots produce, and should produce throughout the nation.

The first step forward is action by the national government. The problem has been before the Congress for years. There is a massive and exciting literature about it — massive in bulk, exciting in places; and anyone who wants to have a well-informed opinion on the subject

need do no more than read *The Nation and the Schools*, by Keith and Bagley (history, up to 1920) and *Equal Educational Opportunity for Youth*, by Edwards, a report in 1939 to the American Youth Commission.

It is possible, of course, to conclude (even after one knows the facts) that equal educational opportunity in this country should never have been attempted at all and should now be abandoned as an ideal. The other day I heard a member of the judiciary in a New England state declare that free public high schools are a mistake. That position seems to me to commit anyone who holds it to the abandonment of democracy, both in theory and in practice. Conservatives ought to examine their consciences in this matter, and if they decide against public secondary schools they ought to fortify themselves by reading up in the literature of pessimism on the human race and its educability.

There is another possible position, the mere statement of which introduces the second of those topics which I am listing for cocktail parties among the intelligentsia or for meetings of parent-teacher associations between elections. One can hold to universal free education as an ideal but doubt our ability to pay for it, at any rate beyond the elementary grades. Here we have a stand which may be taken by anthropological optimists who are at the same time economic pessimists.

Examination of this doubt leads to some interesting conclusions, the chief of which is that our whole system of taxation needs to be cleared up in relation to the services it pays for and the economic resources from which our taxes must be drawn. At the moment, education is faced with a competition for public funds which has never before been so severe. Relief and pensions are taking millions that might have gone into schools. State aid and federal aid are not, or should not be, mere fire escapes for the superintendent and the school com-

mittee when they make up the budget for the local school system. The local authorities ought to look at the facts of the local situation in a new and larger perspective and present to the taxpayers a clearer picture of the economic state of affairs on the one hand and the condition and aims of the schools on the other. In some places (Rochester, New York, is an example) budgets for the schools really tell the story; in most places they do not. If all school systems did as Rochester does, parents and citizens would have before them interesting pictures of school activities, diagrams showing what these activities cost, and comparisons of school expenditures by years and by departments. Most people who grumble about taxation for public education don't know and can't find out whether the game is worth the candle.

What the experts in public finance call 'justification budgets' ought to be the usual and expected thing. Conferences between school executives and authorities on taxation ought to be common, whereas those that are held in the summer at the Harvard Littauer Center seem to be the exception rather than the rule. It does not appear that the United States is too poor to pay for as much public education as it needs, but it does appear that its machinery for doing so is woefully inadequate. Of course there are inherent difficulties in making school costs, in their relation to the complete financial picture of a community and the values at which the schools themselves are aiming, the subject of casual conversation; but the problem of presenting these matters with reasonable clearness to the public is certainly not beyond us.

Whatever is done toward that end, one problem will arise, in studying school costs, which can be neither dismissed nor, for the moment, solved. It cannot be solved, that is, without prolonged study, patient and tolerant discussion, and a willingness to experiment and compromise. The problem in its most gen-

eral terms is the problem of religion in education; more concretely, the relation of State and Church to each other and to the schools; specifically, the development of a Catholic school system, paid for by the Catholic people, alongside the public school system paid for out of taxes. I speak of this problem not to discuss it here, but to express the hope that it may hereafter be discussed in public with less prejudice than it usually arouses. And I would point out also that the issues in question can best be approached in the light of historical knowledge — knowledge of the history of public education in America, of the history of Catholic education, and of both in their relation to traditional policies in American government and American social life.

The topics I have barely brushed in passing seem to me important because they force discussion out of petty ruts. They cannot be explored without abandoning the notion that in education all that matters is to find the perfect way for some one child or group of children — for my child or yours or a mythical average child ('the' child) or for the college-going group, the gifted, the elect. I recognize that other topics equally enforce a national or social point of view. In any case the question ought to be, What ways are feasible and statesman-like to bring the education of this people to the highest national level?

There is no single answer, to be sure; the things to do are many. For that very reason articles in magazines insisting on some one thing needful — on the sterner teaching of the standard subjects, or a single fixed curriculum derived from any list of books, however great, or more attention to the nature of the child and better ways of teaching — ring amateur at best and sometimes empty. If one good custom may corrupt the world, it is pretty certain that one good idea may yet corrupt a national system of education. People who are interested only in the best school for their own boy are not more annoying, perhaps, than people who

know just what should be done to make American education perfect overnight.

At this point, I perceive, I ought to raise against myself what might be called the previous question — What do you mean by a national system of education? What would it be like if we had it?

II

I do not mean a system run from Washington. The bogey of federal control has been raised for years to head off federal aid to schools; and the bogey of state control has been raised in the same manner to head off state support for local systems. There are dangers in remote control, of course; but it is ridiculous to think we cannot pool resources without surrendering our local rights. Localism has, besides, very grave dangers of its own. The historian of our Massachusetts public schools, George H. Martin, says that 1824 was the high-water mark of local autonomy under the district system (with its 'deestric't' school committeemen who hired their nephews and nieces as teachers) and the low-water mark of educational efficiency in the Commonwealth. In any case, a national system of education does not mean a system run by the national government or even by the state governments.

It means a system that can do a national job. A national job in education is compatible with immense variation in local patterns; such variation is, indeed, a necessary element in making American education national. May I be forgiven for referring here to a technical treatise, small but exciting, called *The Adaptability of Public School Systems*, by Paul R. Mort? Dr. Mort will himself forgive me, I suspect, if this reference forwards in a single instance his purpose to stimulate local initiative on the solid foundation of a minimum common program. It is the common program that I must here define and defend, not in detail but in its general outline.

If 'subjects' must be named at all, I

could stand up for the ancients and name reading, writing, and arithmetic — but I should have to warn the company that these subjects, like the old gray mare, are not what they used to be. I should have to go further and say that by themselves they no longer constitute even the sufficient instruments of a national education, to say nothing of its intellectual substance. History would have to be brought into the discussion, and science, together with subjects of vocational value, and subjects whose specific claim is to a value mainly of the spirit; and then the discussion would become professional and I should have to drag into the light and exorcise in public the ghost that lurks behind nearly all debates on the curriculum — the notion that a subject should be taught in school because it ‘trains a power of the mind.’ Important as it is to disestablish that abortive myth as a basis for consideration of the program of the schools, I must not try to do it in the present instance; nor is an exposition of accepted theory on the point (well founded though it is) the best approach to what I have to say about the nation’s task in education. It is the size of the job and its general character, as determined by the outcomes to be hoped for, that ought to be considered.

The size of the job is fixed by certain facts which are in themselves external to the program of the schools. Up to 1870, there were somewhat more than seventy thousand pupils in the public high schools of the United States; now, seventy years later, there are nearly seven million. The figures are approximate, but they are easy to remember and they tell the story. Although enrollments in elementary schools are falling off because our population is declining, there are economic and social forces that make the problem of public secondary education an essentially new thing, and that will keep it before us for a long time as an unsolved problem, on the score of size alone.

A distinguished citizen of Massachu-

setts (another member of the judiciary) once asked me why the seven million could not be given precisely the same schooling as was offered to the seventy thousand. I confess that the very question took me off my feet: I had supposed that no one would even regard that alternative as a possibility. It is not, in fact, a possibility — unless we want to say that adolescents whose abilities and interests are not academic shall be driven out of school and left to fend for themselves in a world that will not and that cannot give them work. The first business of a national system of education is to carry the whole youthful population of the country to the point of its entrance into adult life — and to do so in such wise that every boy and girl is ready for a job or for further education leading toward a job, ready for citizenship in a democracy, and equipped with wholesome personal resources for ‘the pursuit of happiness.’

These are big words, brave hopes; they call for much elucidation. Yet I must let them stand, asking any who would like to debate their meaning to turn to books that seem to me to prove the case for this position. There are many that do so fairly well, but best of all in my opinion two volumes resulting from the Regents’ Inquiry into the Character and Cost of Education in the State of New York — *High School and Life* by Francis T. Spaulding, and *Education for Citizenship* by Howard E. Wilson. I cite these books in particular because they make so clear, so ineluctable, the nation’s challenge to the schools.

To put it still too briefly but perhaps to make the point of view a little clearer: our public education must accomplish the enormous task of adjusting each succeeding generation to our civilization, with all its complexities; and this it must do without exploitation of any class or group and without presenting unnecessary obstacles to progress toward maximum economic productivity, the achievement of social justice and efficient gov-

ernment, or the attainment of beauty, truth, and brotherhood among us. Such things were once with confidence allowed to ride upon the great unconscious processes of history. We had the West to go to; democracy could take care of itself. Now we must fit schooling into a pattern far more consciously defined. The processes of history may make fools of us, but we shall be fools anyway unless we try to think of schooling in the light of our best understanding of the destiny of the United States of America.

If this should sound a bit totalitarian, I can only say that dangers of that sort are lurking everywhere. The proposal that schools shall actually fit the majority of young people at eighteen or nineteen into our economic system does look — even if we remember that these same young people are also to be fitted into our political system and helped to become persons in their own right and that the spirit of the process is to be the spirit of education, not of propaganda nor of exploitation — still it does look as if we were going to impose the necessities of the modern state and its capitalistic economy upon the individual in his youth. I think it means just that. But I think our last condition would be far worse than our first if we let any economy (and there must be some economy, since the Garden of Eden seems to have closed its doors) impose itself on youth without the mediation of the schools. Here is my ground for saying to the radical and the reactionary, 'A plague on both your houses!' The schools can make the economic adjustment of youth a process both humane in its effect upon the individual and helpful in the general progress of the country toward a larger common good. Without the schools, the process is not likely to be either very humane or socially very helpful. But if the schools are to do this fruitful work, teachers must not sell out to factions; and there must be mighty changes in the planning and the personnel of public education.

III

The central function of the schools is guidance. To blurt this statement out and leave it without argument demands apology, which I hereby offer. It is only necessity which keeps me from explaining at some length how it is that I can hold this view without ignoring the great duty of the schools to make democracy a living faith, to open up for children something of the wealth that lies in music, literature, and art, to give them understanding of themselves, and nature, and the life of man. I grant that guidance would be working in a vacuum if schools were only guidance clinics; but *per contra* schools must guide or else the rest is not effective.

A line from Hopkins might be graven on the door of every school: —

What I do is me. For this I came.

The sonnet from which it is quoted continues, to be sure, upon the other note:

I say more. The just man justices;
Keeps grace; that keeps all his goings graces;
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is —
Christ . . .

And this is the side of life and of education which has nothing directly to do with choosing a job or planning an education toward a particular vocation. But selection through guidance is a primary need of the state and choice of work a primary need of the person. Mr. Eliot's Inaugural put that double need with eloquence in 1869. Mr. Conant's article on 'The Future of Our Higher Education,' in *Harper's* for May of 1938, restated it in present-day terms. And scores of books and studies deal with what the schools can do by way of guidance, while the schools in scores of places are doing all they can. Providence, Rhode Island, under Richard D. Allen, has a notable system, for example; and a project started by the late C. N. Greenough of Harvard and now continued by Mrs. Greenough has made promising progress in Arlington, Massachusetts.

But I have yet to find a town or city where the schools are so conducted that their guidance function is completely discharged. It means that business men must know the schools and what they do; that school officials and especially the guidance counselors must know the local opportunities for jobs and other opportunities as well; and this is only a beginning. The whole process of education must be individualized at certain crucial points. Teaching must be lifted out of its routine; perfunctory 'marking' must be changed to give counselors more information when they seek reasons for failure and try to touch new springs of action in the pupil; the possible choices among subjects and activities must be increased, which means inevitably that many small secondary schools must be consolidated. When graduates of high schools begin to come back to their schools whenever they fail to establish themselves satisfactorily in the adult community, *because they know their schools can do more than any other agency to get them started right*, we shall be sure the necessary revolution in school-keeping has taken place.

IV

How is all this possible when the highest salary in the high school of a fairly prosperous New England mill town is \$1800? It isn't possible; although it is surprising to note what can be done on the basis of enthusiasm for youth, a measure of idealism, and an economical wife. But if we are to have public education that really does a national job, the first need is for new public understanding of what schools can and should be like. So long as education continues to be viewed as if it were a bookish, cloistered, and scholastic process, by which the 'faculties' are trained, by which a thing called 'culture,' very far removed from life, is vaguely apprehended and perhaps resented, or certain fixed ideas, inert and disconnected with the world of action, are set up to serve as barriers to thought

— so long will schools be served by teachers who are underpaid and inexpert, so long will none be hired who can guide and place and follow up the graduates and those who leave the schools.

May I enter here a demurrer against the charge that nothing in education, as I see it, has any relation to the intellectual life or cultural values? I hold no grubby view of education. I am concerned here with focus, and the handling of entire populations. I am urging public recognition of the function of the schools in 'the redistribution of human talent.'

If I have written as if everything would be quite easy, once the public had become aroused, I have been led astray by my own eagerness. The fact is that the task could not be done at once or very well if every need were met except the need for knowledge. We still know too little about human talent and its social uses. Research of a fundamental character must be done in schools and laboratories and libraries before we can move fast and far toward the goal by which we are challenged. Yet enough is known now to start us on our way toward it. The obstacles to be overcome by research — how to determine, for example, the extent to which an independent mental trait, deep-rooted in an individual and not susceptible of further special training, prevents him from succeeding in a certain subject and so, perhaps, from entering a certain calling — such obstacles are far less serious now than is the public apathy toward politics and pull in getting 'jobs' in schools.

The grand strategy of the whole undertaking seems to me to come back to what can be done in universities. They can cherish the study of national policy in education in all its aspects. They can bring together experts in finance, in law, in government, in economics, and let them help the educators as they grapple with these larger issues in their field. The educators in their turn have much to give; they know as much about the growth of human beings and some phases

of behavior as does any other group; and they know schools. The universities, besides, could give to men already started on careers in school administration final training for a leadership that now appears but seldom. The Nieman bequest brings experienced newspaper men to Harvard University for a year of study in any department, with the ultimate aim of improving the standards of journalism. The Littauer Fellowships are based on a similar plan for men in public administration. To open all the resources of a great university to practising school officers might bring us appreciably nearer to a national level of achievement in and through our public schools.

No public institution struggles with a set of problems more complex, more difficult, nearer to the pulse of life, more fateful for the order and the onward movement of American civilization, than those the public schools must face. Can anyone imagine what would happen if they closed their doors to one school generation? Is it not easy to imagine what would happen if they were better understood, better supported, better staffed? What if teaching and school management should come to be looked on as a profession, not less to be protected from the unqualified nor less to be rewarded and conditioned to the highest possible performance than the priesthood, law, or medicine?

There is an ideal to be served by schoolmasters as inspiring as any. Indeed, it seems to me to have in it elements of vitality that will finally set it among the highest — and I will make no hypocritical confession here of prejudice in favor of my own calling. What is the fundamental duty of the state? I accept the formulation offered by Whitehead in

his *Adventures of Ideas*; and as I quote his words I ask those who have borne with me thus far to consider how much they dignify and magnify the part that schools must play in bringing to pass the accomplishment of any such ideal.

Speaking of the speech of Pericles as reported by Thucydides, Professor Whitehead says: 'It puts forth the conception of an organized society successfully preserving freedom of behavior for its individual members. Fifty years later, in the same social group, Plato introduced deeper notions from which all claims for freedom must spring. His general concept of the psychic factors in the universe stressed them as the source of all spontaneity, and ultimately as the ground of all life and motion. Human psychic activity thus contains the origins of precious harmonies within the transient world. The end of human society is to elicit such psychic energies. . . . Pericles stresses . . . the activities of the individual citizens. The peculiar civilization of his great speech arises from its stress upon the æsthetic end of all action. A barbarian speaks in terms of power. He dreams of the superman with the mailed fist. He may plaster his lust with sentimental morality of Carlyle's type, but ultimately his final good is conceived as one will imposing itself upon other wills. This is intellectual barbarism. The Periclean ideal is action weaving itself into a texture of persuasive beauty analogous to the delicate splendor of nature.'

Is it a far cry from this philosophic vision to the conception of a national system of education which seeks to find for every individual the best enlargement of his powers and their best engagement in the working world?

(The ATLANTIC approves so heartily of what Dean Holmes has said that it means to open its columns to the further clarification of those issues which he has indicated with such accuracy. Father George Johnson of the Catholic University of America will present the case for the parochial schools in the United States, and in a subsequent paper Dean Holmes will explain the correlation which is essential if this system is to exist in close harmony with our public schools. — THE EDITOR)

FROM THESE BEGINNINGS

Self-Portrait of an Artist

BY SIR JOHN LAVERY

I

NO doubt my first years count — but I cannot account for them. Yet as I remember climbing over trestles where barrels had been kept in a wine and spirit shop, it is evident that my father was a wine merchant. In considerable contrast to Ruskin's father, who was also a wine merchant, he seems to have sold out and cleared out at an early stage, leaving his wife and children to fend for themselves. My brother Harry would be about four, I three, my sister Jane two. We were divided up: Harry going to my aunt Rose's father, a doctor; I to her husband, Edward Lavery, a farmer; and Jane to an uncle Richard, a publican in Belfast. I am told that my mother died of grief when my father was drowned on his way to America.

When I was ten my aunt suddenly told me that she was going to send me across the sea to a very rich cousin of hers who had a big house with solid golden balls hanging over the front door. For days I dreamed of a fairy palace, and soon the day came when I found myself sitting in the cabin of the Belfast-Ardrossan passenger and cattle steamer. I had never seen the sea before, nor the waves rolling up a beach. We arrived at the other side in early morning and proceeded to walk the mile or so towards our destination, which was at a place called Saltoats. We passed two girls disporting themselves in the water, both of whom I painted forty years later. I

was told that they were ladies of title from the big house close by, Montgomery Castle. It did not fulfill my idea of a castle. I was still dreaming of the Palace with the Three Golden Balls.

We came to our destination. Looking up I did behold the golden balls. But the castle was a house upon the portal of which these words were written — UNION LOAN OFFICE. A pawnshop.

My uncle had a remarkable clientele of sailors, Negroes, and miners who came to pawn a strange assortment including picks and shovels, guitars, banjos, concertinas, queer-looking knives and pistols, a large Holy Bible, and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, highly illustrated, which I was told not to look at.

Traveling theatres came to the town, performing in large tents, admission from threepence to a shilling, where such plays were given as *Leah, or the Jewish Maiden's Wrong* and *Ingomar, the Son of the Wilderness*, over which I shed tears. Known as the 'wee pawn man,' I used to hang about and get into the good graces of the artists by giving them an old sword or dirk from the pawnshop. The lady who played Leah held me in bondage until one day I saw her behind the scenes drinking porter out of a broken jug, the liquor escaping down the side. And on hearing her remark to some men, 'There's that bloody boy again,' I was cured and transferred my attentions to Mary Ann, who was the queen of

'Paddy's Castle,' a house in a back street where the sailors used to go with girls.

Mary Ann was a dazzling blonde of about sixteen with an impediment in her speech — using Gaelic and hardly any English. She was mauled about by drunken sailors, and had great attraction for me, now getting on to thirteen. Owing to her reputation I dared not be seen speaking to her. But one evening when there was a crowd, she among them, trying to get into the theatre, I plucked up my courage and sidled close to her, whispering, 'See you when we come out.' She winked and said nothing. That was the beginning of my first attempt at love-making. Alas, it was about Easter time, and I had to go to Confession. There was no escape. It was not so bad as I had expected, but for a long time I was not allowed out alone after dark. Although I knew that the Confessional was secret, I could not help thinking that Father Halloran had been talking to my uncle. Anyhow I never saw Mary Ann again.

Besides bringing me these experiences, the pawnshop enabled me to help my brother Harry, who suddenly turned up. He had been sent by Aunt Rose's father to a training ship at Plymouth. Dressed in his naval rig, he was now on leave, but determined to desert. I fixed him up with a suit of clothes from the pawnshop. Having made a neat bundle of his discarded uniform with a heavy stone inside, we walked into the mining district to a disused shaft, down which we threw it. We were terribly frightened and for a long time afterwards did not know what might happen. Getting well away from the pit shaft, we parted, Harry going off into the wilderness with the few shillings remaining from his leave money, intending to hide underground as a pit boy. Almost a year later a letter came from him in a disguised hand to let me know he was driving ponies in a pit at Longriggend, a name I have never forgotten. When he thought it was safe he came back to Glasgow and took a job as a

clerk in the Glasgow Corporation, where he remained twenty years, got married, brought up and educated two sons and a daughter. Then one morning, without saying anything, he walked out and was next heard of years later in Australia, where he eventually died, leaving his will in favor of the wife and family he had deserted.

II

It may have been this meeting with my spirited brother or merely the exuberant inexperience of youth that made me suddenly decide to make a change. I cannot remember where I got the money, — I must have robbed the till, — but one morning I took train for Glasgow. In a low part of the town I found lodgings where there was a boy a trifle older than myself in sailor rig, whose company I had for some time. He went about the country with others similarly attired carrying packs. They were known in town as 'Dry Land Sailors' because they sold their wares, consisting of gaudy junk supposed to have been brought home by them from their last voyage, though as a matter of fact they were merely peddling the shoddy trash they had picked up in Glasgow. At times I was a little in doubt as to the wisdom of keeping company with them and their girl friends. Their language was new to me, not to mention their freedom with each other. However, soon my money ran out and I was forced to take French leave of the lodging — though I left an empty bag to ease my conscience.

When I began to feel hungry I thought of going to a pawnshop, but had a peculiar aversion to being seen in such a place. I went round looking for one in some obscure corner, but when I found it my courage failed me. Seeing another boy idling about, I showed him a large cameo pin that I was wearing and told him that if he could get half a crown on it I would give him sixpence, explaining that I did not like going in myself be-

cause the man knew me. He took it and disappeared up the stairs. I waited, but he did not return. I crept up into the lobby and peeped into the half-dozen boxes, only to find, in the language of the locality, that I had been bilked. It cured my diffidence.

For a whole week I was without board and lodging. It was summer, and I slept on benches in Glasgow Green, wandering the streets and back yards in the darkness, picking up food that had been thrown away, and washing it in the fountains when the daylight came. Actually I think it must have been longer than a week, for they say that I was a skeleton when found wandering one night in the Saltmarket and brought back to Saltcoats.

Just then there happened to be an outbreak of smallpox, which I naturally caught. I was immediately segregated and placed in an attic with an Irish 'Sairey Gamp,' whose treatment, I expect, was homely. When the crisis was over and I could see again — I had been blind for a week — she tied my hands so effectively to prevent my scratching that I escaped without a mark. She explained that the only safe disinfectant was whiskey baths for a couple of weeks after I was supposed to be better. This suited her. She had an orgy until she overstepped the mark and was dismissed.

The whiskey baths did not do me much good, for I had to be sent to the Glasgow Royal Infirmary and soon found myself standing naked in the amphitheatre surrounded by a dozen medical students, with two doctors explaining that I was an interesting case of hernia, varicocele, and some other diseases that I cannot recall the names of. After much incomprehensible talk I was put in a ward for observation, where I remained about a week, having constant visits from doctors and students until it was decided that I should be operated upon. The other inmates of the ward frightened me by telling me that I was to be taken to the dissecting room and cut up. A

nurse took pity on me, and after much persuasion secretly got me my clothes, and I slipped out with the visitors on visiting day. I do not know what happened to the nurse, but she was so popular with the other patients that I felt sure none of them would give her away.

Once again I was back at Saltcoats, and then over the water to my aunt. Strange as it must seem, there was then talk of making a priest of me. The idea came from my uncle, but my aunt luckily did not see me as the perfect candidate for holy orders, so I found myself back in the fields herding the cows.

III

Every genuine artist creates the circumstances necessary for his fulfillment, and unconsciously does the right thing at the right time. Hence, in spite of the good food, and the security, and the experience of what I had been through when I ran away before, I was determined to get away again. A certain boy I had known in Glasgow had told me that it was always possible to get something of a job in the Mineral Department of the Glasgow and South Western Railway. I made much of this to my uncle and aunt, and was so successful that without further inquiry they let me go off with five pounds in my pocket. On the way I spent most of it in entertaining a cousin to the theatre at Belfast and having our photographs taken, so I arrived in Glasgow with the proverbial half-crown and my belongings in a carpetbag.

Pat McLoughlin, the friend in question, found me sitting in his lodgings when he came from work. I told him what had happened and he behaved nobly, going out and bringing back a couple of kippers and a steaming loaf from the baker's. I can remember with what gusto I devoured my share of the food and the excitement of my first music hall afterwards, where we looked down

from the gallery at the beer-laden tables and hilarious company listening to the great MacDermott sing, —

'Oh, the sea, the beautiful sea,
Oh that up-and-down motion (*with gestures*)
When on the lee scupper
One lays one's supper,
It's oh, the beautiful ocean,'

followed by other artists with 'Cham-pagne Charlie,' 'After the opera is over, After the opera is done, We gems of the very first water, With the ladies we'll tootle-tum-tum,' and suchlike ditties, McLoughlin joining in the choruses with the rest of the house. I felt on the high road to fame and fortune, for it was the happiest evening up to that time that I could remember.

The next day I did manage to get a job with the Mineral Department of the Glasgow and South Western Railway, which was in a back siding with hundreds of coal trucks being shunted backwards and forwards outside the window. My job was to take their numbers and weight of contents and enter the details and make out the total for the day. I am still pretty helpless with figures, and I used to sweat blood trying to add up the long columns. In the little office or box where this was done there was a clerk in charge who allowed me considerable freedom after the first day and did not bother to correct my columns, though he could do in a minute what had taken me hours.

Soon this work drove me distracted and I decided to give it up. Then, realizing that in this case I should immediately relinquish my wages of 7/6 a week, — which, with an occasional sovereign from my uncle, was all I had, — I decided to carry on until my month's wages were due. I knew that with the best will in the world I could not make the monthly returns, so I looked up the ledger for the returns of the other months and struck an average, which was accepted. I then took my wages and disappeared into the blue, with a sense of shame and remorse for what would be

sure to happen when the report reached the auditors — for my friend and chief would certainly be dismissed.

Pat came again to my aid. I was anxious to get out of Glasgow at once, and owing to him I got a job in another pawnbroking business in Hamilton, which is a garrison town a few miles out. I arrived on Saturday. Unfortunately on Sunday afternoon a 'Scots Grey' from Belfast invited me into the barracks. He had two girls with him. They were both domestics from Mount Vernon, and in the evening I was weak enough to promise to see them home, some eight miles away. It was a clear frosty night as I walked back, but I became very tired and, brushing the snow off a low wall, sat down. About four in the morning I was awakened by a pitman going to work. I had been frozen asleep for about five hours, but, managing to crawl on for another mile to the pitman's house, I lay down on the floor in front of the fire. On arriving at the pawn office I discovered that the rush was over, since Monday morning in a pawnshop is the busiest in the week, and consequently I was dismissed by the infuriated pawnbroker.

There was no alternative but to go back to Glasgow, and I made for a low quarter of the town called the 'Gallagat,' or the Road to the Gallows. This place consisted of dilapidated mansions that once had housed the aristocracy but were now inhabited by the poor. They were turned into the meanest lodging houses, where a cracked sign indicated that single beds could be had for sixpence a night and double ones for fourpence.

It was to one of these mansions that I found myself forced one cold and wet evening towards midnight. The half-open door, hanging at a slant from a broken hinge, led to a broad staircase lit by a gas lamp in the street. The interior was strewn with rubbish and dirt from which there rose a strong smell of disinfectant. As I reached the top of the stairs

an argument was in progress between the lodging-house keeper and a drunk, who after a display of foul language was finally ejected by being thrown down the stairs — taking me with him. When I reached the top of the stairs again in the semidarkness a harsh voice called out, 'And what the hell do you want?' Taking care to show him by my demeanor that I was at least sober, and rattling the few coppers in my pocket, I resolutely said, 'I want a bed' — hoping that he would not turn me out when he found I wanted only half a bed. My finances could not run to a whole bed to myself, for I had the next day's meal to think of and was already very hungry.

I entered what at one time must have been a magnificent room, for even now the gold of the elaborate cornice glittered in a shoddy way. There was a great open fireplace dismantled down even to the grate, and on the hearth was a blazing coal fire surrounded by small tin cans of a more or less uniform size, their owners squatting on the floor or on anything they could find. The furniture consisted of empty boxes. When I had time to observe the inmates I saw there were all the usual navvy types, ranging from sixteen to sixty, mostly smoking and talking. The only light came from the fire, and in distant corners I could discern shadowy forms sprawling on the floor seeking rest, while an extra-loud snore would occasionally eclipse the conversation round the fire.

The squalor was sickening, and I was wondering whether I should be able to stand it when I was brought to my senses by the keeper with 'Weel, ma lad, where's yer money?' 'Could I have the share of a bed?' I asked. For a moment I thought he was going to turn me out into the street; but after relieving himself of some unprintable oaths he thought better of it, saying briefly, 'Oot wi' yer fourpence.' With the aid of a bit of candle guttering down the side of a bottle he preceded me into a still more grimy room. Packed together on the floor and

on mattresses raised from it were ten or twelve human forms, each with some kind of covering and a sort of bolster, under which the sleeper had clearly put his valuables. Taking me to a most unsavory-looking object stretched on its back on a mattress in a gloomy corner, my host said, 'There ye are, ma wee man; ye'll be as snug as a bug in a rug.' I winced at this pleasantry a little, as I could see that he was speaking from long experience. His parting salute was 'Put yer trousers under yer head.'

In the semidarkness of the night the full horror of the place was less evident than in the morning light. Most of the laborers had gone to work, leaving behind only the lowest of the low, smelling to heaven. My bedfellow was still there. In the window there was a sink called a 'jaw-box,' with running water but no soap or towel. I washed as best I could and dried myself with the back of my waistcoat.

When I went out into the street I met a friend. He was three or four years older and had been my ideal of everything I thought wonderful. He could draw in a way that thrilled me, and was an athlete and a boxer. On one occasion I remember holding his jacket and keeping an eye out for the police while he gave a lesson to a drunk who had bumped against him in the street. While we had breakfast I told him where I had spent the night. He told me he had enlisted the day before in the Sixtieth Rifles. Although I had a genuine horror of service in any shape or form, my admiration for him was such that I hurried off to take the Queen's shilling.

Fortunately I was disqualified. My uncle heard of my condition from Pat McLoughlin and demanded that I should go back to school at Saltcoats.

IV

Up till then I had never seen anything in the way of painting except gaudy lithographs of the Battle of the Boyne,

oleographs of the Stations of the Cross, and others of a religious nature. One day I won in a church lottery an oil painting magnificently framed in gold, said to be a wonderful likeness of the late Cardinal Bono. Unfortunately my uncle would not let me take it out of the convent to which it belonged, on the grounds that it had been blessed by the Pope. However, in lieu of this, he gave me a golden sovereign, saying that he was sure that when I became an artist I should be able to paint a cardinal for myself.

Then one day there appeared in the *Glasgow Herald* 'SITUATIONS VACANT: A smart lad with a knowledge of drawing wanted. Apply with specimens of work to J. S. McNair, Artist and Photographer, 11, West Hill Street.' I dashed for the first train to Glasgow and was taken on as an apprentice at £10, £15, and £20 per annum for three years. I had read of the old masters' taking pupils, and it was with feelings that Raphael might have envied that I got back to Saltcoats with the news. My uncle forgave everything, rigging me out in new clothes and saying that one day I might be a great artist with people in carriages coming to my door.

So off I went to Glasgow again — a different person this time. My age was about seventeen. I soon conceived a great admiration for McNair — for not only was he a good artist on canvas, but a better one on flesh. One day two visitors who did not look at all like sitters called and asked for him. I was about to tell them that he was not at home when they said they had come to be painted. There was a distinct smell of stale alcohol about them, and I observed that each had a black eye, not to mention some disfiguring gashes. It struck me as strange that they should choose the most propitious time to have their portraits done. I soon learned, however, that they wanted their actual faces painted. This was immediately carried out with great skill by McNair, who was

able to remove all traces of nocturnal excess by means of oil paint. In an hour's time a Romeo and an Orlando left the house.

This time I chose a more respectable lodging place than the Road to the Gallows. My landlord and lady were a road mender and his wife. He was a quiet little man who was always tired when he came home from work; and I remember how his front teeth were gone, causing his pink chin to project, while his pipe, which never remained alight, hung loosely from his gums — a depressing spectacle. My landlady was one of those wives who cause the puzzled onlooker to ask the question, 'How did he ever come to marry her?' Her aggressive and truculent air; her large nose, which hooked at a dangerous angle; her formidable jowl, which supported some very large hairs; the cast in one eye, which always remained stationary no matter how much the other revolved, were intimidating. If she caught me drawing on Sunday she did not fail to assure me that no good could come of it. However, as she went to church from eleven till two and from three till six, I could still get in six hours' work.

V

I was obsessed with the mystery of art that had suddenly come to me. Nothing else mattered. At bottom I cared only for my work. The reader may think that I say this with satisfaction. It is with neither satisfaction nor complacency that I think of Jane — my sister. When I could afford two rooms and a kitchen to myself, Jane, who was now sixteen, came to keep house for me. She was very proud of the position and washed and scrubbed all day and every day until the place shone like a new pin. As I was at the School of Art night and morning, we saw little of each other except on Sunday, when we went to early Mass that I might have a long day for painting.

My sister felt lonely at times, but I scarcely gave her a thought. One day I noticed that she had been weeping. She said it was nothing, but I began to be uneasy and to pay more attention to her. I saw she had quite changed from the bright laughing girl who had arrived, to a listless creature insisting there was nothing wrong and assuming a hollow gayety. This went on for some weeks until the obvious truth could no longer be hidden. The shock was terrible. Looking back on all that happened, I cannot understand how I could have been so cruel. I try to make excuses on the grounds of my youth and my all-conquering ambition to be a painter, but I can never forgive myself for the tragedy that followed. We had very little money to live on, but as everything seemed to be running smoothly I never troubled to ask her if I gave her enough each week for household expenses, and her pride would not allow her to ask for more. Instead she had been pawning the few bits of jewelry she owned, and had thus become friendly with the pawnbroker's assistant, who, without my knowledge, had been visiting her in my absence. When he discovered what had happened he disappeared.

When I found that he had gone to America I at once set about sending her after him — not knowing where she would find him, nor realizing what it meant in her delicate state of health or what a steerage passage really was! One idea absolutely absorbed me, and one only — to get her away before anyone would know of the disgrace and I should be involved.

It was raining when we reached the docks, and I can still see that horrible den steaming with its stench of humans, tar, and bilge water deep down in the fo'castle of the very small Anchor Liner as she lay close to the Broomielaw Bridge in Glasgow; nor shall I forget the mass of men, women, and children huddled

together in the semidarkness, intensified when the only source of daylight was obscured by the emigrants struggling down the ladder with their soaked bedding and belongings. Only bare wooden boards were provided for sleeping accommodation. I left her there and returned to the empty house. Feelings of remorse come to me when I remember her frightened look of anguish with no word of complaint when we said goodbye.

She found him. Though he had run away to America to escape it, he married her and the child was born. In a few months they returned to Glasgow. I was shocked at her appearance, now strange and wild-eyed. I went to see them from time to time, but I could not like him, though he had made good. He was educated and talked advanced socialism, with which neither my sister nor I had any sympathy. Another baby came. She was unhappy and careworn. He was hard and coarse in appearance. I stopped seeing them, blaming her for the mess. She knew that I was ashamed of the connection and appealed to me for help to escape from him. One evening I found her waiting for me outside the studio door, afraid to knock. I refused to help her.

Two days later her husband came to tell me that she had thrown herself over Stockwell Bridge into the Clyde, and that I was wanted at the police station to identify the body. She looked young and beautiful, with the strange serenity of death.

I doubt if there are a more heartless crew than poets, painters, and composers. We are encouraged in it by our lay brethren — I often wonder why. Robert Louis Stevenson said that we are merely on a par with the daughters of joy who are paid for doing what they enjoy most. Art is so sacred, the love of it covers a multitude of sins — and so we excuse ourselves.

(To be continued)

HARPER'S FERRY FLOATING AWAY

A Poem of Recognition

BY THOMAS HORNSBY FERRIL

I WAS riding on the B & O,
Great Cacapon to Sir John's Run,
A hundred miles from Washington,
I dozed,
I dozed by Sleepy Creek
And Cherry Run and Blairton . . .

I dozed a rhyme:

*I'd like to know
If light from the great star Fomalhaut
Is shining on Joe Aleck's place
Way out in Frannie, Wyoming . . .
The goldenrod brings Fomalhaut
And old Joe Aleck used to cook
For Grover Cleveland long ago . . .*

I said and stopped the rhyme,

And the lounge car ticked the rails so slow
I thought the car was sliding back
And ingots of the moonlight slid
Along the other track.

A magazine lay open on my lap
And I said to an air-conditioned Congo porter:

'Please let me know when we come to Harper's Ferry.'

A meadow stitched with stubble scudded past,
I dozed the starlight down Joe Aleck's place,
The swing-glint of it over the Big Horn Mountains,
The swing-glint of it over the Absarokas;
I thought of Grandpa telling how old John Brown
Would hook one leg across the hominy block
And preach the birds off every tree in Kansas.

Harper's Ferry,
Harper's Ferry,
Me here,
Me here,
Almost Harper's Ferry,

Old John Brown about to stop the train,
 Old John Brown about to free the slaves . . .

I read a folder to pass the time,
 The folder made me make a rhyme:

*The midnight B & O came in,
 It whistled from the West,
 Conductor Phelps he stopped the train,
 A rifle at his breast;
 The porter was the first to die,
 They didn't understand
 The reason why he tried to cross
 The bridge to Maryland . . .*

*Swing low, sweet chariot,
 Takin' Mister Hayward home . . .*

*How do you set a porter free?
 How do you set a porter free?
 John Brown tried and so do we:
 Work or War or Dole or School?
 God or Grab or Golden Rule?
 How do you set a porter free?
 Or set you free?
 Or set me free?*

The train rolled on about the time it takes
 To wonder if the trout in the Beartooth Mountains
 Strike or reject the ancient grasshoppers
 That thaw as good as new from Grasshopper Glacier.

I opened my eyes,
 I looked at the magazine,
 A girl in the magazine crossed her legs at me
 To try to make me buy a cigarette;
 I saw the porter coming down the aisle:
 Harper's Ferry,
 Almost Harper's Ferry . . .

'Sorry, we jus' gone by,' the porter said.
 'Ah thought you woke up when ah pulled yo' coat.'
 'Sorry,' he said,
 'Sorry,' like an amendment,
 Grasshoppers floating away,
 Harper's Ferry
 Floating
 Floating
 Away . . .

'*Sorry?* Why should he be?' said the magazine,
 'No class of workers in America
 Is worse exploited than the Pullman porters!'

'But he really was,' I said. 'It was my fault
 For dozing off . . .'

And the magazine exclaimed:
 'You'd have the porter hollering *hallelujah*
 Each time the whistle toots for Harper's Ferry?'

'Only,' I said, 'when you're in the thick of it,
 And I mean *you* and not the porter now,
 History implies a recognition . . .'

'Recognition of *what?*' said the magazine.

'Whatever gives you access to yourself,
 Whatever gives you yesterday tomorrow,
 Whatever . . .'

'Nonsense!' said the magazine.

'There's love in it,' I said . . . 'the land, the living,
 And sometimes what your senses try to tell you
 To keep the dead you want to live from dying:
 John Brown's gone unless I want to keep him.'

'The dead are dead!' observed the magazine.

I said: 'It's only chance it's Harper's Ferry.
 Another day . . .

Kaskaskia or Sundance,
 It might be Sitting Bull or Coronado,
 It might be climbing a maple to whittle a whistle.'

I thought of the taste of maple bark at the top
 Of the tree on the Fourth of July,
 Dick hollering up:

'Johnson just licked Jeffries!'

Old Dick dead:
 Killing himself on the Coast and nothing working
 In his poor dead skull any more if you stood on his grave
 And tried to ask him:

Who was Ethan Allen?

If you tried to ask him:

Who was Stephen Foster?
 Can you play *Susanna* on your mouth-harp, Dick?
 Dick, did you ever hear of old John Brown?
 What's it like, Dick, smelling the Gunnison meadows?

The smell of gas lights in the Baptist Church?
 And *Nearer My God to Thee* and mother saying:
 'They played that at McKinley's funeral'?

'You're very silly,' said the magazine.

I looked far back as I could up the Shenandoah,
 These deep subaltern shadows of my land,
 My people suffering,
 My people shining,
 Angels whispering to old John Brown,
 Angels fingering his eye-sockets . . .

The magazine kept talking, talking, talking:

There's nothing to this recognition nonsense,
 The world is real and we are up against it,
 My difficulty here at Harper's Ferry
 Was one of simple ideology:
 The John Brown thing was purely economic,
 My old friend Dick, that's why he killed himself,
 The economic cards were stacked against him.

I pressed my face on the windowpane of the valley,
 The trees, the hills, the railroad tracks, the river,
 The outer night so certain and unmoved
 By wistful therapies men dream for men . . .

Answer me! Answer me! O strange Potomac!

I could imagine forbears back to Adam,
 Archers, sailors, wanderers, herdsman people,
 And all their various troubled circumstance,
 Not willfully to put me in this lounge car,
 Not asking me to pay them any debt,
 But putting me here . . .
 The plasm of their passion,
 Their very valent continuity,
 The lover gasping *now* to the other lover,
 The sexton saying *now* to the boy with a spade:

All Nature saying nothing till we ask it,
 Like me here now to ask a shagbark tree
 Some invoicing of John Brown's clotted hair,
 The scything of the heart,
 The tedded blood,
 The long long voice a prisoner about to be
 The earth of earth again
 Gives any wood lot.

THE AIR FORCE WE NEED

BY FRANCIS VIVIAN DRAKE

'It has become necessary for every American to restudy present defense against the possibilities of present offense against us.' — FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, *January 12, 1939*

I

THE evolution of the airplane from the shaky, secondary weapon of the last war to the grim question-mark in current European affairs is a factor of overwhelming significance to every independent nation. No matter how the war develops, it is already apparent from the case histories of Barcelona and Warsaw that, without power in the air, no country will ever again be able to survive aggression. Henceforth a disciplined and modern air force becomes a bulwark, an integral part of every national defense.

Under the circumstances, it is not surprising to find our own government embarked on a huge expansion of our air defense, for which the sum of about \$500,000,000 has recently been appropriated. The puzzling feature about this program is not its size, but the lack of public understanding concerning it — the fact that the man in the street is displaying such slight comprehension of a measure that is vitally related to the safety of himself and of his family.

This is a dangerous and costly attitude. It is dangerous and costly because this same taxpayer, the man who is going to pay for our new air expansion program and for its astronomical upkeep, is the unsuspecting victim of a grave, if popular, delusion. He is taking it for granted that in exchange for these huge expenditures he is getting the finest and most powerful air protection available. Un-

fortunately, this is by no means a matter of course.

Money by itself is not the synonym of air power. If we look back at the six years that preceded Munich, we see that during that time the British and the French together appropriated \$2,500,000,000 for air defense, only to reveal at that historic showdown an embarrassing inferiority to the German forces. They are still trying to catch up. Nor can we take size to be a true index of strength. The mere weight of numbers, while impressive to the eye, is not essentially protective. At one time the French, with a staggering total of aircraft, had hardly any defense at all. With so much at stake, let us consider first of all precisely what we mean when we speak of a national air defense.

Air power is not an absolute term. It is a variable, infinitely adaptable, capable of infinite interpretation, and one must therefore understand at the outset that there is no such thing as 'a standard air force.' Unfortunately airplanes have always been publicized with the maximum of glamour and the minimum of hard fact. The public is easily thrilled — by speed, by size, and particularly by numbers. However, to be effective, each air force must have its genesis in the needs of the country it must defend. The geopolitical situation must decide the structure and design of an air force if it is

to be counted as a vital weapon and not merely as an impotent agglomeration of aircraft.

Air power can be of great benefit to the United States. In spite of its cost, it can be adapted wonderfully to our geography. It has mobility; it can strike within a few hours in any direction — in the Atlantic, the Pacific, the Caribbean — and strike so far and strike so hard that attack can be intercepted far from the homeland. Unlike the Navy, it can operate in widely separated spheres, simultaneously or in swift succession. It can defend one entire coast in case the Navy is defending the other, or in case the Panama Canal is blocked; or it can coöperate with the Navy far at sea. It is instantly available, and can exert such vast power that it can bring victory at less cost in men and money than by any other means, *provided* that it is designed to execute the actual tasks that confront it on the day of battle.

The pressing question, therefore, that arises out of our new expansion program is this: Are we, in exchange for our \$500,000,000 and subsequent upkeep costs, going to get an air force *designed for us*, something that will assure us fullest freedom from attack, maximum efficiency in defense?

This article is written in the belief that we are not so assured, and that the government, feverishly touched off by the rise of air power abroad, is allowing itself to be altogether too much influenced by patterns of air defense that are fundamentally European instead of being fundamentally American.

II

Combat airplanes fall into two main classes, both reënforced by scouting and observation planes. Since neither class is adapted to perform satisfactorily the work of the other, these should not be confused. They are (1) bombers, whose function is to drop bombs, to destroy objects on the ground or on the sea;

(2) pursuit ships, whose function is to attack bombers, to fight hostile aircraft, and to scout.

Our own air defense brings all its weight to bear on the second group, the pursuit planes, which would be of considerable use if our nearest potential attacker were 300 instead of 3000 miles away. We have multitudes of these small pursuit jobs, and it is planned to have thousands more, as against a negligible number of heavy bombers. It is the writer's opinion that this ratio is fundamentally opposed to our requirements and that it suggests a theory of air attack nowhere supported by the facts.

It implies that the government anticipates the possibility of a massed attack by air, the sort of attack to which England, France, and Germany are essentially vulnerable. This conception is nullified by the geographic difference between the United States and Europe. While it is true that commercial aircraft are making single crossings of our oceans with routine regularity, this fact is not of military consequence. *There are no military planes in existence or in serious contemplation capable of crossing either ocean in the necessary numbers, with a load of bombs, and of effecting a return.* The range necessary for round-trip trans-oceanic flights could be obtained only by such sacrifices of speed, manœuvrability, and bomb load as to make them quite impractical. The planes would have to be transported here by carrier ships, and the defense against this method of attack is to sink the carrier ships before their planes can reach our shores.

Now, as regards an attack from land: to accomplish this an enemy would first have to establish vast bases in this hemisphere, and it is not credible that we should allow him to do so. Any attempt at such construction would be frustrated forthwith either by the exercise of our sea power or by heavy bombing.

If our Air Corps is not intended for overseas fighting in a foreign war, and if the theory of attack by air is untenable,

this would seem to exclude all but the following premise: that the expanded air defense is to function against naval attack. This brings up another paradox. In naval warfare, pursuit ships are of small destructive value. They have small range, and cannot carry the great weight of explosives necessary to sink warships. To produce a decisive weight would require so many planes that our pilot losses would be tremendous.

In point of fact, our military policy is obscure to a disquieting degree. The breakdown of the present Army Air Corps procurement objective, as given by Major George Fielding Eliot in his book *Bombs Bursting in Air* (Reynal and Hitchcock), resolves as follows: —

Bombers, long-range.....	178	
Bombers, medium.....	381	
Total.....		559
Attack (ground liaison) bombers..	169	
Pursuit.....	727	
Observation, reconnaissance, etc....	510	
Total other types.....	1,406	
Training and miscellaneous.....	1,372	
Total operating planes.....	3,337	
Total reserve planes, all types.....	2,163	
Grand total.....		5,500

Significantly, the author calls attention to the fact that only 178 long-range bombers are included in the above program.

By this ratio — 178 to 3337 — the program ignores what is potentially one of the most deadly and important weapons of defense ever conceived. Further, it ignores the fact that the vital defense of the United States is *control of the sea*, that it is in the prevention of *sea attack* against this country that air power has become a decisive factor. It cannot be overemphasized that, as a matter of practice, attack upon us can come only by sea from ships, or from airplanes borne in ships, and that to handle this situation we are enfeebling ourselves by building the wrong type of aircraft. We are building pursuit planes instead of long-range bombers, which are the only planes able to sink such ships.

Public uncertainty notwithstanding, the function of a bomber is not primarily the destruction of defenseless women and children. Neither is the bomber essentially an 'offensive' weapon. No more ridiculous delusion about air power could exist than this recurrent idea of 'offensive' and 'defensive' aircraft. Such phrases have no meaning. Every United States armament is for defense. The thought behind every ship in the Navy is not the invasion of someone else's shores, but the defense of our own. If hostile ships attempt to approach our coast lines, obviously our battleships and cruisers must go out and try to sink them before they can reach us. That is defense. It is not any the less defense to sink an advancing enemy with heavy bombs, nor does such action automatically transform the long-range bomber into an 'offensive' weapon. Surely no country is going to wait for enemy planes to reach its cities, or for priceless bases to be constructed, because it is not etiquette to try to intercept such dangers before they can do active harm?

The truth is that every death-dealing weapon is defensive when used to resist an invasion and to destroy an aggressor's bases, and all weapons, including pursuit ships, are offensive when used for invasion. I have stressed this point because it is the pivot upon which turns the whole question of our air defense, with all its potential importance to our lives and to our homes.

III

Next let us consider what we can count on at present when it comes to repelling a formidable sea power, or a sea-borne air power. First we have the Navy. The United States Navy is amply able to cope with any other single navy afloat, but no one can yet say what combinations of foreign naval power may result from the European war, or what the possible strength of such combinations may be. It is conceivable that

simultaneous attack may come from both oceans, and it is necessary for the Navy to preserve concentration upon one or the other. The cost of a two-ocean Navy would involve over \$4,000,000,000 for construction alone.

Next we have air power — first in the form of the aircraft of the Navy, flying boats, torpedo planes, observation and fighting craft. These planes, however, do not constitute air power in the sense of our discussion. They are specifically designed to operate as part of the Navy, to work hand-in-glove with the fleet itself. This is a vital arrangement; the British did irreparable harm to their sea power by making the Royal Navy depend upon an entirely separate organization for aircraft. Our Navy cannot have its air force cut down and be made to depend upon some land organization, nor can it have its aircraft detached for some other service.

Finally, we have the Army Air Corps. This possesses all the military planes which really constitute our air power. As we have emphasized, they include an overwhelming majority of little pursuit planes, which would be more useful if our oceans could be shrunk to lakes. The long-range bombers include many so large that their cost, manufacturing time, engine demand, crew requirement, and vulnerability to a single lucky hit loom out of all proportion to the military value.

The United States Army pilots are second to none, but unfortunately their training does not include constant, routine operations far at sea. For this reason they are largely unfamiliar with aerial operations against armed ships in the open ocean. They lack the years of practical experience, the years of working in intimate conjunction with surface warships, so necessary to win a war.

Potentially, the Army Air Corps is a formidable defender. Properly equipped and trained to work with and against sea power, it could deny our shores to any enemy in the world. However, it is

not apparent from the evidence we have just considered that the Army Air Corps is so equipped, or that the government's huge expansion program comprehends the requirements peculiar to our country.

It is submitted that what we require is an Air Striking Force of at least 3000, and preferably 4000, high-speed, long-range bombers, manned by crews trained in long-distance operations over the open sea. It would be of primary importance for them to strike accurately at a small, moving objective, in sufficient numbers to offset initial losses from undamaged ships, and for them to be able to effect a return by day or night, in any weather, without running out of fuel or getting lost.

For such an Air Striking Force, it is important to produce a new basic bomber, specifically suited to our needs. It must be a radical type of long-distance bomber capable of flying far out to sea at speed altitude, above the weather, before it descends to bomb the enemy. Such an airplane is by no means visionary. Bearing in mind that the vital requirements for the defense of the United States by air involve the transport of the *maximum weight* at the *maximum speed* with the *maximum climb*, we are brought to the following conclusions: —

First, the new bomber must be of the right *size*. If it is too small, it will take too many pilots to drop each thousand tons of bombs on an attacker. If it is too large, the loss in crew, engines, and equipment in the case of each hit becomes prohibitive.

Second, the new bomber must be *simple*. That means cutting down the mass of gadgets and special requirements that inevitably clog military planes in time of peace. If it is simple it can quickly be replaced on assembly-line principles. It is a significant fact that all our manufacturing plants combined could not at present replace in six months our probable losses of the first few weeks. The House of Representatives Commit-

tee Report on the present Appropriation Bill remarked: 'The [proposed] total becomes 1690 planes for delivery during the eighteen-month period December 31 to June 30, 1940. Past performance suggests that to be an exceedingly ambitious program.' Ninety-four planes a month! Capacity has already been greatly increased, but it is a significant fact that so many of our important plants — Boeing, Douglas, Pratt and Whitney, Martin, Sikorsky, Lockheed — are situated on or close to our coast lines, where they are most vulnerable.

Third, this airplane must be *fast*, so that it can intercept an enemy as far away as possible. The farther away, the longer it takes to get there. The longer it takes, the fewer bombs can be carried in proportion to fuel, and the more planes must be built and risked to deliver a decisive blow. To gain the vital advantage of high speed without high fuel consumption, it is necessary to fly moderately high, where the air is thinner and offers less resistance to the airplane.

It should be possible to achieve the following standard performance: —

- (1) *True speed*, 350 miles per hour at operating height of 20,000 feet
- (2) *Landing speed*, not more than 75 miles per hour
- (3) *Radius and load*, 3000 miles with 1-1½ tons of bombs, 2000 miles with 2 tons of bombs
- (4) *Power*, 2 engines
- (5) *Crew*, 3

This is a more radical performance than our military planes now give, but there are planes in existence, in airline use, which might well serve as a basic design for the proposed type.

IV

Success in this scheme of air defense, the *margin of safety*, is largely governed by time. Conditions, favorable or otherwise, play their part; but, generally speaking, more ships can be sunk in three days than in one, and therefore the

farther out interception can take place, the greater must be the margin of safety.

The maximum economical speed of a great fleet is about 1000 miles in three days. The speed of the proposed bomber would be 1000 miles in three *hours*. The inference is obvious.

The point of detection depends upon the range of the scouting aircraft, but the detection itself is a matter of routine training. We already have reconnaissance planes of ample range. A hundred scouts, flying ten miles apart, can form a line 1000 miles wide. The diameter of a great battle fleet is far greater than the gap between the scouts.

So long as we could keep high-speed bombers coming in successive waves, the enemy numbers would be continuously diminishing. A single heavy bomb dropped on the flight deck of an aircraft carrier ends her usefulness. Her planes, with nowhere to land, must crash into the sea. Thereafter the fleet is blind. Similarly, sufficient bombs dropped on a battleship deck can cripple or disable her; dropped close alongside, they can open up steel seams and sink or slow down the ship.

Capital ships, manned by disciplined men, are not easily overcome. Publicity has been given to the precision of high-altitude bombing — of peacetime targets. The destruction of undefended, static objects, and the views of theorists who sink a ship with every bomb, have little to do with the realities of war. It is the stark truth that in the stress of battle brave men must come down through anti-aircraft fire and gamble their lives to place bombs directly on the decks of ships. Nevertheless, if a score or more of planes have to be sacrificed to destroy one big ship, it means that a handful of men have accounted for 1500 enemy lives, that two or three million dollars' worth of equipment has been sacrificed to demolish a thirty-million-dollar floating fortress, capable of killing thousands of men in surface action. In continuous, concentrated attack by dive

bombing there can be little doubt of the issue. A crippled battle fleet, thousands of miles from its bases, without speed to escape, must incur certain defeat.

The practical aspects that enter into such a scheme of defense — inexpediency of bombing by night, fog that can shield an enemy for hundreds of miles, toll from anti-aircraft fire, and so forth — these contingencies require utmost organization and point to the necessity for elements of preparedness which are not apparent in our present policy. They underline the importance of ample margins in time and strength, as well as in facilities for refueling, rebombing, remanning, and replacing aircraft of the Striking Force. Above all, excess hitting power is absolutely essential; without continuous hitting by big bombs, aircraft are not much more than a nuisance to armored ships.

V

The work of setting up machinery that can repel a great naval attack in the Atlantic — perhaps simultaneously with one in the Pacific — is enormous. There is no short-cut route to the creation and maintenance of air defense, even in time of peace, and even for a country with the resources of the United States. It is a huge job to develop an Air Striking Force of 3000 planes with corresponding land equipment. That is why we cannot afford to waste time and money on unsuitable programs.

Personnel is a leading problem. To build the Striking Force planes is a tough assignment, but it is an even tougher one to train enough pilots and mechanics to handle them efficiently. We have only to look at the organization of our commercial airlines which lead the world in efficiency. Flying year in, year out, over the same routes, on lighted and radio-equipped airways, they require nevertheless for every airplane in service approximately four pilots and twenty-three skilled ground technicians.

In the Army Air Corps we have a

body of men of first-class ability, but in addition we need large reserves of well-trained pilots and mechanics. Excellent steps are being taken by the Civil Aeronautics Authority to initiate widespread elementary training; but navigating complicated, multimotored aircraft at speed and altitude, attacking steel ships manned by disciplined crews — these are not things that can be learned in spare time or by flying around a country airport on a Saturday afternoon. War is a violent strain, and the qualifications for survival come extremely high.

The best handling of this great task and the control of the many problems of air defense which will always be with us suggests the establishment of a National Board of Air Defense, including, but not controlled by, representatives of the Navy, the Army, and the Civil Aeronautics Authority. It suggests a master policy to originate and correlate the elements of research, production, and training, and to keep these things in harmony with the manufacturing facilities and labor conditions of the country.

Such a Board would be able to view all our air needs as a whole, not from the angle of a single department. It could energize the work of a Central Research and Development Plant, for the development and test of radical improvements; this work would, of course, be in addition to coöperating with and encouraging the commercial plants from whose research and experiment so many great achievements have come. It could even set up a Central Government Unit for test construction of all planes on mass-production principles, before release of contracts to private enterprise. It could be empowered to subsidize assembly-line units in the aircraft industry, adapted to very large emergency production. It could require that such plants be kept retooled to all improvements in the basic type, so that their existence would make possible enormous replacements in time of war, and obviate the need for excessive numbers of planes in actual service.

The Board would have available a wealth of productive power in American industry and in engineering brains. Our aircraft plants, while dispersed and of relatively low individual capacity, have produced aircraft which are copied and bought throughout the world. In Detroit we have another industry which has performed fabulous feats in simplifying, cheapening, and mass-producing transportation. Much of this technique could well be borrowed if the aircraft industry went into real mass production.

The Board, with a central policy, could control the influence of research upon production. Improvements coming from the drafting table and the development plant could be incorporated into existing production just as they are in the automotive industry.

The Board would have power to create the necessary training bases and all the resources they require. It could secure the coöperation of the Mercantile Marine in connection with training pilots to locate vessels far at sea and under all conditions. It could arrange coöperation with units of the Navy. It could obtain from the Maritime Commission old ships now laid up, which, fitted with automatic steering gears to vary course and abandoned at sea, would provide admirable moving targets for dive bombing.

VI

Sober reflection must always suggest the improbability of an invasion of the

United States. However, the possibility of attack must be conceded, and in any event, whether or not we believe in this possibility, the decision has been taken and the expansion program is under way. We are working up to \$2,000,000,000 a year for national defense, and it has been stated that next year's Army and Navy expenditures will reach \$3,000,000,000 — almost as much as our total federal expenditures as recently as 1927!

The cost of construction, great as it is, is less than half the story. In the \$250,000,000 aircraft expenditure reported on June 12, 1939, for instance, \$120,000,000 was for airplanes, and the balance of \$130,000,000 was for land, equipment, maintenance facilities, and so forth. An airplane, as a unit, is a cheap weapon of defense; but the upkeep is exceedingly high and the obsolescence endless. It is significant that the Act of April 3, 1939 covering aircraft expenditures authorized \$300,000,000 'together with such annual appropriations as may be necessary to maintain such air force.'

There must be a limit. The deeper in we get, the greater must be the taxes, the broader must be the tax base. However we look at it, the fact remains that we all have to pay for the protection of our homes.

If our great expansion of air power is to warrant its cost, it must conform to our American needs. It will be a sorry upshot if we squander man power and money on air policies that are outdated at their very inception.

THE BROTHERS HOUSMAN

BY AGNES REPPLIER

THERE is an oppressive similarity in men, and a wide divergence in brothers. Whether we accept this as a fact, or deny it as a theory, makes very little difference. In either case we can ignore it (accounting for things is an uttermost waste of time), and proceed on our way untroubled. The divergence is more interesting than the similarity (men are not peas in a pod), and sidetracking, which is a waste of material in peas, is reasonable and right in men, though it leads to lamentable conclusions. Cain and Abel must have been disturbingly unlike as children. Romulus and Remus had the same reasonable ambitions, but they came to grief over the fraternal rocks. Brother against brother is more genuinely historical than are brothers side by side. Yet there is no kinship in the world so rich in possibilities, no loyalty in the world so ennobling to the hearts of men. For one thing, it is very old. For another, it is very proud. Pride heads the seven deadly sins; but the trouble with most of us is that we stand exempt because we have so little to be proud of.

There are two Housman brothers known to fame. A third, Herbert, who was killed in the Boer War, appears to have died with the silence of a soldier. Every family needs one member of this type, and most English families possess one. Their graves mark the uttermost limit of British control, and their tradition supports it. Two famous brothers are good measure for any household, being two more than are usually vouch-

safed. The surviving Housman, standing undazzled on a pleasant pinnacle, relieves something that is akin to boredom by turning resolutely to the memory of his brother, A. E. Housman, who died with recognition pressing close upon him, and with an undue proportion of influence. There is a regrettable story which Clarence Darrow told the author of *A Shropshire Lad*. He said that he had used that blameless volume in persuading a soft-minded jury to preserve Loeb and Leopold in an ungrateful world.

When I carried *A Shropshire Lad* from friend to friend, striving to awaken enthusiasm for its remarkable contents, I failed signally. Recognition came quickly, but it never came through me, except in the case of Dr. Horace Howard Furness, who understood and accepted the poems readily enough, but who insisted that, while their setting was English, their inspiration was German. An English rustic, he pointed out, does not come back from the grave to inquire about his ploughing and his sweetheart. To his practical mind, dying is final. It is the German who strays in and out of the jaws of death as though they were a gate which swings both ways. Yet Housman's kinship with the sons of English soil is the most penetrating thing in the poems. He does not have to assert this kinship. His chance allusions have all the sureness of earth and air.

They hang us now in Shrewsbury jail:
The whistles blow forlorn,
And trains all night groan on the rail
To men that die at morn.

How intimate it sounds! How completely one with the hangman, and the hanged, Housman has grown to be. And this incredible simplicity, this close alliance with men who seem ordinarily a bit remote, is brought about by the use of the two letters that spell the word 'us.'

The initialed Housman stands or falls with *A Shropshire Lad*, and the indications are that he will stand long. The Housman who has a Christian (and a very great saint's) name has been so brilliantly versatile that there is hardly a field of letters which he has left untried and unadorned. The overwhelming success of *Victoria* (on and off the stage) has lifted him as high as ambition can reasonably expect to climb. It leaves us speechless with admiration for the author's understanding of a life which he has never been compelled to share. Dullness is not confined to courts. It is as universal as death. It gives lectures, it preaches sermons, it dines out, it sings comic operas. But it has never been so unerringly drawn as in Mr. Housman's two volumes on the Queen. The treadmill is riotously gay as compared to one of Victoria's dinners. Yet there is nothing accentuated in their soberness. Why should not the royal hostess show Landseer's drawings to Lady Normandy and remark, 'So like life. You can almost see him wagging his tail. I do think Mr. Landseer is a great artist.' And what could Lady Normandy reply but 'He is indeed, Ma'am!' Yet the thought of these harmless sentences — or something like them — repeated every night makes the boldest spirits quail. Greville does quail. He is reduced to feeling grateful to the Duke of Sussex for being a little drunk. He does not like intoxicated old gentlemen, and the Duke is far from amusing. But if a cat had caught a mouse, or had had a fit, it might have restored the inanimate to life.

Now to have made dullness entertaining is surely the triumph of a great artist. Mr. Andrew Lang once said to

me that he did not see why people in novels talked brilliantly and sometimes improperly, whereas people whom he met at dinners told him about their sons at college and their daughters at boarding-school. But college sons and boarding-school daughters are good material, and might be gayly handled; whereas the conversation at Mr. Housman's court dinners is possessed of a perfect and complete nothingness. It is this nothingness which, in the author's hands, makes them supreme. Of what avail to Mr. Greville was his wit when he was dining with the Queen? He tucked it out of sight and hearing, and became one with his neighbors. Hence this choice bit of a 'conversation piece.'

THE QUEEN: Good evening, Mr. Greville. Have you been riding today?

GREVILLE: No, Ma'am, I have not.

THE QUEEN: It was a fine day.

GREVILLE: Yes, Ma'am, a very fine day.

THE QUEEN: It was rather cold, though.

GREVILLE: It was rather cold, Ma'am.

THE QUEEN: Your sister, Lady Francis Egerton, rides, I think, doesn't she?

GREVILLE: She does ride sometimes, Ma'am. (*There is a short pause; GREVILLE himself takes up the running.*) Has your Majesty been riding today?

THE QUEEN: Oh, yes, a very long ride.

GREVILLE: Has your Majesty got a nice horse?

THE QUEEN: Oh, a very nice horse.

(*THE QUEEN smiles, inclines her head, and passes on, leaving MR. GREVILLE with his deep bow unfinished.*)

One very distinct impression gleaned from these dramas and sketches is that Victoria was a disagreeable woman. She did not want to be disagreeable. She tried to be otherwise. But nature, represented by ancestors, was too much for her; and it is on the whole easier for a queen than for a subject to be untrammelled. Her control must come from within, whereas most of us are firmly controlled from without.

Elizabeth was also a disagreeable woman. She allowed herself that privilege on a more liberal scale than did Vic-

toria, who was a constitutional sovereign with a conscience and a Prince Consort. Elizabeth's conscience went the way she bade it. She was not a Tudor for nothing. Victoria's conscience (coddled in her girlhood) nagged at her unceasingly, or spoke in seemly fashion from the lips of her husband. It was only in her long widowhood that she gradually forgot it, and acquired the habit of believing that what she did was right because she did it. And by that time reigning had become second nature, and the authority of the crown was as superb and as limited as the constellation of Orion.

How remote is this majesty, this certainty, this monumental dullness, which is like the dullness of grazing flocks, from the harsh ups and downs of the Shropshire Lad, to whom nothing seems reasonable but adversity, and nothing is certain but death. Yet the little book links itself adroitly with the Queen in its opening poem, '1887,' and never loses sight of her. She stands behind the law, and the law represents to the rustic mind a superb but meaningless authority.

There sleeps in Shrewsbury jail to-night,
Or wakes, as may betide,
A better lad, if things went right,
Than most that sleep outside.

'If things went right,' — that is, if things went our way, — how admirable we should all of us be! How good of Mr. Housman to remind us of this rejuvenating circumstance. Even as it is, with the cards stacked against us, those of us who are not going to be hanged have a good deal to our credit.

Between the life of the Shropshire Lad and the life of Victoria's court, who would not turn to the Lad? He has jail ahead of him, and the gallows around the corner; but he takes the world in his stride, and enjoys or endures whatever may befall. He botanizes a little ('who can sever an Englishman from his botany?'), but the meaning of friendship is clear to him, and so are the long stretches of time which he does not cumber with detail.

The gale, it plies the saplings double,
It blows so hard, 'twill soon be gone:
To-day the Roman and his trouble
Are ashes under Uricon.

History taken with gaps like these is an impressive spectacle. The Lad, who is presumably ignorant of the War of the Roses and the First Reform Bill, feels the dramatic sequence of events. He feels the breath of life blowing through the world, and sees man as a thing of splendor striding over the wrecks. The consciousness of defeat fails to dim this vision. Defeat is our allotted portion, but splendor survives, untarnished and unafraid.

Nothing about a writer concerns us deeply but his books. His books are of necessity affected by his attitude toward his fellow creatures. They are a mixed lot, these fellow creatures, docile to deal with individually, but difficult in the lump. Laurence Housman has accepted them on easy terms, which grow easier and easier as experience modifies resentment. He is a bit cramped by his views on war, which are liable to obstruct the clear outlines of life; but that is a modern phase of thought which must be met with understanding and patience. It works out well on paper, which is to its credit, and years will test its worth. A. E. Housman refused to like or even tolerate his fellow creatures. In this he was blameless but mistaken. The intolerant ones did not care, because they did not know, how despicable they were. The sun shone on them, when it shone at all, and they walked their appointed paths. There is something a little ludicrous about tolerance because it implies that intolerance is compatible with sanity. God tolerates us, but we do not know for how long or on what terms. Nature tolerates us, but her tolerance is not kind. We affect to tolerate one another, which is a shallow excuse for cherishing an unnegotiable sense of superiority.

The Housman of *A Shropshire Lad* offered no such affectation, and implied no such excuse. He appears to have had

a fretful mind. He took his dislikes very seriously, and was as conscientious about detailing them to his brother as his brother has been conscientious about detailing them to the world. His refusal to accept the order of Merit, his refusal to accept academic honors, were manifestations of personal pride. That he did not like other men who received them seems to the ordinary mind no reason at all. Had they been offered to enemies of the State, no decent Englishman would have considered their acceptance; but we can hardly expect a government or a university to be aware of our personal prejudices, or to be considerably influenced by them. Dr. Johnson's refusal to 'bandy words' with his sovereign represents a composed sanity as refreshing as the wind that blows.

Well, we must take our men of genius as they come, and thank Heaven for them. This is not a dull world, but a tragic one. Spain is at best a scantily populated country, and she has been drained of her vigorous young manhood which should have carried her forward to another generation. The regret of Pallas Athene — who was a warrior maid — over civil strife rings in our ears. Moreover, a land which has been dowered by her sons with a large share of beauty is the heritage of the world, and we ask ourselves sadly how much that belonged to us has been lost. For my part, I never saw a bit of old Spanish wall that any lover of loveliness could bear to see destroyed.

When some caviling critic said to Mr. Chesterton in 1918, 'What has come out of the war, anyway?' he answered, like the man he was, 'We have come out of the war, and we have come out of it alive.' It is all that can be asked of a nation which argues best 'in platoons'; and it is a vision noticeably absent from the mind of the *Shropshire Lad*. He sees nothing in battle but death, which is a personal point of view, and very like him. Soldiers are not all killed, and do not of necessity die young. Kipling was aware of this

refreshing truth; but Housman, having the poetic temperament, refuses to take it into account.

'None that go return again' is the burden of his song. And there is small comfort in the going. When we read,

Oh never fear, man, nought's to dread,
Look not left nor right:
In all the endless road you tread
There's nothing but the night,

we feel like the exhorted policeman in *The Pirates of Penzance*.

Men are not spurred into action by sentiments like these. The British officer in the World War who confessed that when he was in a tight place he kept hold of his courage by recalling tags of Latin rhetoric got more out of them than if he had remembered the whole of the *Shropshire Lad*. They were men of steel, those Latins, and they had Rome behind them, Rome trailing a cloud of glory through the centuries. It is hard to overestimate the value of a background in men's lives. If it chances to be the best that earth affords, it floods their souls with light. The poorest citizen of Rome, the meanest citizen of Paris, feels this splendor, and rejoices.

Laurence Housman takes the world of London lightly. It has been in a caressing mood, and he has submitted to, rather than courted, its caresses. Perhaps he recalls from time to time the short-lived enthusiasms of his own life; but we all expect to be remembered a little longer than we remember others. Perhaps he really knows how flawlessly he has done the work he assigned himself. Victoria's reign was a gold mine from which he extracted the pure metal. If the *Shropshire Lad* survives the Queen, it will be because of its medium, and because of its straight appeal to the human heart, which will be happy or unhappy for inadequate reasons until the final sun has set. Satire is bound to lose its point, and the mocking laugh be stilled; but nature which promises little and gives less will deceive men to the end. The *Shropshire Lad* believes in her most devoutly

when he treads the London streets.
They are as kind to him any day as

The beautiful and death-struck year
which he has left in the lanes, but he
cannot believe it.

In my own shire, if I was sad,
Homely comforters I had:
The earth, because my heart was sore,
Sorrowed for the son she bore;
And standing hills, long to remain,
Shared their short-lived comrade's pain.

'Eve,' said Adam when the gates
of Paradise were closed behind them,
'the Garden was loath to see us go.
The flowers lifted up their heads to
be plucked, and the trees bent down
their branches to brush us as we
passed.'

But Eve the temptress paid no heed to
his word. Sentiment had no place in her
terror-stricken heart, and comfort there
was none.

SOFTLY RETURNING

BY CHRISTOPHER LA FARGE

I HAVE cast down my name into the Grand Canyon of the Colorado:
It has been flung from the worn miles,
It has been lost in the tangible and violet echoes,
Wrecked on the rock banks of the river of far sky.

I have written my name in the music of the Virgin River:
It has been swallowed in the caverns of Zion,
It has been worked to a red roundness, a littleness,
It has crumbled in the red wind's and the brown wind's drying.

I have spelled my name in the shadowless leaves of the mountain mahogany:
The sun has burnt it to the yellow of grass,
It has been crushed by the feet of the deer of the Middle Fork,
It has turned white under the high snow of the Idaho passes.

Now I shall whisper my name softly in the close of the Queen's River Valley:
The swamp maples will guard it with leaves burning,
It will be held in the yellow traces of the November witch-hazel,
I shall hear my name as my father's name, softly and homely returning.

HOW MUCH DO YOU HELP THE CHURCH?

BY THE REVEREND PHILLIPS ENDECOTT OSGOOD

I

WHAT I am going to say does not apply to sincere and loyal church supporters. Neither does it apply to those who are hard-hit and therefore unable to do for their church what they would like to do. (Probably they more than make up for their financial inability by prayers and service.) Neither does this screed apply to any specific parish — surely not any to which the writer has ministered. Heaven forbid! These are generalizations from ministerial experience — such generalizations as any group of Protestant parsons would agree upon in their equivalent of Papal Bull sessions, *ad clerum*, *sotto voce*, and *sub rosa*. But these generalizations do concern a much larger group in the average church than is usually realized. It is the group that makes or breaks a church's solvency. The truly sacrificial are only a minority. The rest of the parish shades off from vivid, vital loyalty to infrared and ultra-violet nominality — a wide spread of spectrum to spectral.

For the defensive and therefore hypersensitive, any frank talk about finances and the church is taboo. But such a nettle-question ought to be grasped firmly by vestries, elders, and clergy more often than it is. They find the problem persistent despite the rigorous censorship of a congregational psychology which considers it more than slightly indelicate for public mention. If these jottings seem to any reader unduly

brash, let him ask himself why. Is his reason actually spiritual?

What a queer notion it is that churches are expected to be like orchids, to thrive and be exotically luxuriant on air. Money is too sordid and soiling a thing to be mentioned from chancels! Begging sermons do more harm than good, one fears. Resentment is roused by intruding into services pleas for contributions. The analogy of Elijah fed by ravens is dimly in the background of parochial policy.

If faith is right, support will come; so we are told. The tales of orphanages supported by prayer are triumphantly quoted — but such orphanages seem to be far-removed and little investigated. 'The Lord will provide.' Selah! This theory would work out perfectly if all of a congregation were like its ideal members, who give from sheer self-abnegating comprehension and passion for the Cause. They are the disciple band, disciplined by love's realism to unostentatious sponsorship. But the remainder of the church folk? How many of them let themselves off more easily? Barometrically one can estimate their religious climate by their attitude toward church underwriting. The less the fidelity, the more revealing the donation.

To what extent should the church temper its wind to the unshorn black or gray sheep? Is 'the customer always right'? Must the treasurer shrug his

shoulders and meekly say nothing? An ecclesiastic of our acquaintance sometimes shows his intimate friends his collection of Donald Ducks. Donald Duck has no inhibitions; he can explode with luxurious abandon whenever he sees red. So this man, when irked beyond public complaisance, goes home and winds up a scape-duck and lets it picture his ire until his blood pressure lessens and he chuckles. After all, he does not wish his D. D. to stand for a Disney character.

It is downright pathetic to be forced into such childish expedients as separate name-and-number and number-and-pledge lists which have no cross reference, in order that the account books can be kept without names and that sealed statements, designated only by numbers, can be addressed by a second person from the second register. Before printing, that statement will have been rewritten perhaps six times until, with innocuous tact, it coos that this account *seems* not to have been completed by the sum of two dollars and forty cents, but of *course* errors may have crept into our books and we shall be grateful to be notified if this unfortunate possibility has occurred — and so forth. When the treasurer or cleric picks up his newspaper and sees the published Community Fund donations he wonders whether publicity has not entered into the giving of the amounts some of his people are willing to have blazoned in those lists. He almost wishes he might avail himself of this method, denied him by the tiptoe secrecy of the church's alms. He would not dare to list the names of contributors on a chart in the church vestibule, even without any indication of the sum of their benefactions. One bold missionary once did that, with a space on the chart for every Sunday's envelope to be checked. Yes, that year he had 'marvellous results' in promptitude of payment. But when the next canvass came around he found an embarrassing strike against subscribing at all.

Is this animus against knowing who

gives what, shared by duly elected elders, deacons, or vestrymen, mainly defensive? Realists should have nothing to hide from legitimate administrators. The rapt and childlike, whose rose-petal delicacy of spirituality is bruised by mention of the kirk's overhead, are joined by those who use this extreme sensitivity as camouflage. One remonstrant exploded with wrath because his preacher had been so indelicate as to assert from the pulpit that even Jesus of Nazareth had to be financed for His ministry.

All this is difficult (and humorous) enough, but the loose offering is more so. That loose offering comes from two groups — those who have already paid a lump sum in advance, but who would not think of letting the plate go by untouched each Sunday, and the far more numerous company of non-pledgers or unaffiliated. In the usual city church, the average amount per loose-offering worshiper, after the number of envelopes has been subtracted from the attendance total and even the extra-giving few have been included, works out seven to nine cents per person. The more 'popular' the service — that is, the more of a special feature it has to draw a crowd — the lower that average sinks. Yet it would be distinctly bad taste to remind such people that even a third-rate movie would cost them three times as much. One angry treasurer went so far as to count the number of coins on the plate. After meticulous allowance for those probably otherwise accounted for, he announced to his Board (confidentially, of course!) that in his large church more than one sixth of the congregation could not have put in a single penny. What a puzzle is the complex that brings a person to church for supposedly religious purposes and then lets him drop in a bad nickel or an out-of-town car token!

Many a Protestant envies the Roman Catholic system of the man at the little table by the door, collecting a flat-rate seat charge, with all extra offerings be-

yond that assured minimum. Yet whispers come that this does not solve the bread-and-butter bill of these parishes. The prevalence of Beano and Bingo evenings ratifies those whispers, the size of the major prizes manifesting the hoped-for net profits. I have heard it said that in certain parishes Beano annually brings in almost twice the total of the Sabbath income. So, quite plainly, there is no oasis of plenitude from voluntary subscriptions anywhere among the communions.

Money talks. Sometimes it even shouts. Once you know its tongue, it plainly says how much adherents really care. To those who lead the Church Militant it proclaims who are actually its Gideon's army. No second sight is required to know who gives from the top of his purse and who from the bottom of his heart. Even the tiniest gift, if sacrificial, is sacramental; it conveys Grace. But tips are revealing: they have little Grace to impart from their grudging self-withholders. Money talks.

No, this does not mean judgment by mere amount. Widow's mites still have shining aureoles. Any discriminating administrant will be able to evaluate the gift by the evident consecration of the giver. In daily, unostentatious ways what a man is will out. Anyone but a dolt can estimate roughly proportionate ability and offerings. He cannot fail to reverence the twenty-cent pledge of the young man who walks three miles, to and fro, to save carfare and give the money to the church. He cannot be unimpressed by the deserted wife with three youngsters who offers to launder the altar linens in lieu of a pledge. In contrast, the lady with the new mink cape who gives less than she must spend on her inescapable perfumes seems to merit a 'Mene, Tekel' all her own. And the man who pays a much larger sum for his golf than for his and his family's sacraments must not hope to escape the suspicion that his outlay represents his proportional caring.

At Every-Member Canvass time it gets to be almost a game, along with the checkup of the parish list and the discovery of family happenings no little bird has been prompt to report, to make a collection of new alibis. There is a vast difference between excuses and reasons. Excuses do not excuse; they merely state a preference. The volubility of evasive dodgers, and their naïve expectation that the smoke screen deceives, amaze the parish ambassador. Such are clearly not 'God's poor,' whom it is high privilege to assure that lack of money must never cause them to deprive themselves of the church at the time they need it most for their morale. Reasons have a way of ringing true, compelling both compassion and implicit acceptance.

II

There is much covert curiosity over ministerial fees. It isn't only the Rectory children at the top of the stairs who want to know 'How much didja get?'

Most Protestant churches have an unwritten agreement, sometimes frankly stated, that for their own legitimate supporting members there is no expectation of a fee for any needed ministration. There are no charges to the family of God for the normal use of its own church. Heat and light and janitorial incidentals, as well as the minister, are freely theirs. But when non-members or non-supporters shop around and choose a certain church for their exceptional occasion should there not be a charge to cover costs? And, no matter what he does with it, should not the minister have his honorarium? It would seem that he is as important to the ceremony as the organist, but he does not often fare as well.

Weddings are in a slightly different category from funerals or baptisms or special meetings ('with a few words by one who needs no introduction'). Weddings are legal functions as well as reli-

gious. The law provides for a minimum fee, perhaps so that justices of the peace may not feel they are undersold. Custom dictates that the groom shall give the officiating cleric a fee, which the dutiful cleric as customarily turns over to his wife.

Here again — and indelicately — money talks. The calibre of wedding participants or of exploiters is obvious in their attitude toward costs and a fee. The simple wedding filled with beautiful emotion will probably end with a sacrificial gift. The elaborate wedding may also show deep sincerity by tangible symbol to the representative of the church that blesses the mating. But the 'splurgy' wedding is more than likely to reveal its lack of profound mysticism not only by cavalier treatment of the incidentally necessary clergyman but also by sundry flippancies and non-religious emphases. Occasionally, indeed, an ostentatious wedding may not even produce a note of thanks to the man of God who has had the preliminary interviews (endeavoring to make marriage seem awesomely holy), the difficult rehearsal, and the supervision of his church's readiness.

The same holds true of funerals involving those not of the parish. The more religious the people, the more evidence of appreciation there will be. But just what idea of the church has a bereaved family who send for a minister 'someone has recommended,' have him come out for prefatory details, then accept the service and committal — and 'the rest is silence'? Unbelievable? Oh no. One such funeral proved to be a case of a virulently contagious disease where the family insisted on an opened coffin, and the parson, discovering a local church connection, was told, 'You see, we didn't want to expose our minister.'

Make no mistake: the decent cleric is not on the still hunt for fees. He usually shrugs his shoulders and smiles wryly and forgets the personal side of slights.

He takes as tokens of moving appreciation such grace-banknotes as incidentally come for ministries rendered, and uses them for something extra-gracious and graciously extra. But his soul retches when pleasant, or less than pleasant, pagans misuse the institution of which he is a steward, as if someone had insulted his beloved and he were helpless to punish. He can't bear to have the honor of the church profaned — but he *has* to bear it! Even a physician of the soul recognizes anæmia of sensibility by its symptoms. *Per contra*, he recognizes tingling moral health. As a cinder in the eye is more painful than one on the back of the hand, so he is irked when 'society' sees no wrong in the exploitation of the church's offices.

III

Every denomination is gravely concerned over the developments of the last decade or two and their effect on gifts to the churches. Each one has to make drastic adjustments to meet the new state of affairs. There is no evasion of the fact that the churches must cut their garment of salvation according to the economic cloth allowed by world conditions. The depression, higher and higher taxes, threats of war, and the general chaos of competitive world-systems are all disrupting. The churches are in the same boat with other cultural institutions on a very choppy sea. But education, the arts, and social service can as a last resort be aided or even taken over by government, whereas the churches can never be.

One of the dangers of our era is the undermining of the imponderables by the apparently imperative bread-and-butter insistencies. The refining, mystic, idealistic, spiritually creative agencies are feeling the sand sifting out from beneath what they thought was reasonably solid rock. While no one can deny that it is unreasonable to expect calm Olympian philosophy and high poetic nuances

of inspiration from the man who is fighting for solvency, nevertheless 'man doth not live by bread alone,' or even by 'bread and circuses.' Girls on strike in a textile mill painted on their banner, 'We want bread, but we want roses, too!' Humanity, even in a time of economic revolution, must have its quota both of material and of spiritual nourishment.

Every college and school, every art museum, every symphony orchestra, every settlement house or charity, every church, feels the twinge of shrinkage in support. When one is forced to cut his budget he naturally blue-pencils first the items which appear both optional and beyond the grimly practical. By the casual or nominal member the church is too easily classed as a luxury. Only the thoroughly devoted, carrying minority will recognize that the church is basically essential as the sustainer of morale, and will pack its giving with increased support. In sacrifice value the benevolences of this group mount to heroism.

Do the arbiters of our economics nonchalantly ignore the declining support for all charities and churches? The government's retort would be that there is exemption from income taxes, estate and inheritance taxes, for any charitable gifts up to 15 per cent of gross income — which makes the state really a participant in such donations, since it goes without the 8 to 76 per cent of these sums it would otherwise have collected. Indeed, it might be said that the state should receive grateful acknowledgment for its share of the gift and the donor should frankly admit that he has given only the net balance. The state could also protest that exemptors do not take anywhere near their possible leeway. For the present level of benevolent giving is averaged at 2.033 per cent of income. At least one substantial Stewardship Movement includes among its slogans and objectives 'the lifting of the present level to the

unprecedented figure of 3 per cent'! The state's encouragement of benevolences therefore seems a bit hypothetical.

Total deductions have taken a toboggan slide. From 1924 to 1933 the diminuendo was from \$533,000,000 to \$252,000,000. For 1934 and 1935, the last years for which figures are available, there was an increase up to \$305,000,000, but the climb out of the Slough of Despond is not yet over. Certainly the increase of intensity in church and charity pleas gives no basis for blithe optimism.

Perhaps the supporters of churches, institutions, and agencies might console themselves with the reasoning that this drop in their fortunes is only a part of the general depression if they did not see the Gargantuan expenditures of the government and the self-assessment of the populace for the 'luxury trades.' In the very worst years, 1932-1936, when colleges lost 18 per cent, community chests 24 per cent, charities 29 per cent, and churches 30 per cent, jewelry spendings leaped by 25 per cent, theatres 41 per cent, automobiles 203 per cent, and radios 302 per cent. A single major prize fight grosses more than a goodly college budget. A big football game involves more money than the entire missionary and social-service program of any leading denomination. More money goes for cosmetics and chewing gum than for all church offerings.

None of these expenditures are vicious in themselves. And the constituency for baseball or the movies or beauty aids is larger than for philanthropy. The two do not entirely overlap; therefore any effort to erase the disproportion will not reach most of those responsible for it. There is great disparity between a vestry meeting and a directors' meeting, not so much in the personnel as in their proposed budget.

IV

Inside this total of shrinkage of benevolences the churches' subdepart-

mental share has also been subdivided. Its loss in self-support has been alarming, but its loss in selfless extension work has been worse yet. The support of an institution from which givers get direct benefit is underwritten with some sense that this is not giving but paying for value desired and received. But such generosity as those for sustaining missions and allied activities are real giving; therefore, they suffer more from curtailment.

Coupled with the fact that only a minority of church members give conscientiously is the change in belief about missions. Missionary boards may persuade themselves that the falling off in their receipts is due to high taxes and lowered incomes, but pastors who are in touch with donors recognize a definite increase of resistance to making donations designed for extension of the Gospel beyond our borders. The number of otherwise loyal parishioners who doggedly announce that they 'don't believe in missions' is mounting. The calibre of these opponents gives pause. Discounting people who are plainly rationalizing their selfishness into a plausible alibi, we still have to face a backbone group of otherwise public-spirited, intelligent men and women who disagree with the very idea of Christian extraterritoriality. They are precisely the ones who make up the membership of the Foreign Policy Association, Community Fund teams, China Relief, Refugee Committees, and vestries!

The average annual per capita giving in twenty-two non-Roman communions now shows \$11.28 for congregational expenses, against \$2.19 for all non-local work. When these averages are broken back into detail, it cannot escape notice that the very communions that are predominantly Fundamentalist (or 'orthodox' or 'conservative' — choose your own term) are well above the Liberal (or 'progressive' or 'modern-minded') in their contributions. Let us consider the roster: —

PER CAPITA GIVING FROM LIVING DONORS (1938)

	For Con- gregational Expenses	For Extra- local Work
United Presbyterian.....	\$16.80	\$7.09
Presbyterian, South.....	16.40	5.18
Moravian, North.....	17.38	4.86
Church of the Nazarene.....	26.35	4.54
Seventh-Day Baptist.....	10.45	3.79
Reformed Church in America..	19.66	3.76
Presbyterian, U. S. A.....	17.64	3.58
Protestant Episcopal.....	20.26	2.53
Methodist Episcopal.....	14.11	1.98
Congregationalist and Christian	14.10	1.57

The average of gifts beyond self-support coasts from 29.69 per cent of the total income with the United Presbyterian Church to 11.14, 12.30, and 10.02 per cent with the last-named trio. Small wonder we are being urged to 're-think missions.'

The diagnosis of the waning enthusiasm of the 'advanced' folk would take analysis of the subconscious. If, as Chesterton affirms, Christianity sings the Paradoxology even more than the Doxology, here is an illustration. It would seem consistent that the broad-minded who feel the world's pulse should also recognize that the Christian ethic is the only solution of our dangerous muddle, that the Golden Rule must be established between classes, nations, and races, and public opinion everywhere must be leavened by faith, hope, and charity. The 'heathen's' distrust of soap-box evangelism is distrust of a type of missionary now long past. But that bitterness still persists in ignorance. Madras marked the moment after which no informed churchman could think of missions as an effort to pattern native churches according to Western denominationalism. Indigenous churches are now building their own self-expression according to their own idiom, asking of home churches only the aid of spiritual ambassadors and funds. The Christian missionary nowadays is social engineer, statesman, appreciative friend, skilled servant of need, and educator far more than he is an exhorter. Yet some otherwise wide-visioned liberals

still set up a straw man and anathematize him. It is of small use to argue that foreign missions are not the whole story of church extension. In one sample major communion, hospitals, colleges, schools, orphanages, churches, native leaders, doctors, teachers, nurses, and Bible distributors account altogether for only thirty-nine cents of each dollar of the extension budget. The objector ignores the twenty-two cents for domestic aid, the twelve cents for our national outposts and possessions, the one cent for youth work, the six cents for religious education, social relations, and promotion, and the necessary but inadequate ten cents for administrative expenses (I omit decimals and sundry minor activities). He still withholds his dollar for 'foreign missions.' He ignores his right to designate his gifts to projects in which he does believe. Josh Billings once said in effect, 'The wust trubble about tew menny folks is thet they know for sartain so menny things thet jest ain't so.'

V

What does money say to the churches, then? Four loud truths, at least:—

1. Ours is a debilitized age; not merely a time of transition, but an era which is cutting back to the roots of all our institutions. Much that we and our fathers once rated among civilization's finalities is removed from the glass case of infallibility and subjected to acid test. The Church has to revalidate itself, with no favors asked or granted.

2. It will be good for the Church to be obliged to prove its case under this drastic questioning. It will rediscover the difference between churchianity and Christianity. It will insist less on an orthodoxy which is dogma *about* Jesus rather than the religion *of* Jesus. It will learn that Christianity is a way of living, with pragmatic authority, and that team play is the first Christian unity to be achieved. It will recognize

that the small support for its ministries is a criticism. Where such criticism is justified, there must be simplification and vitalization; where it is not, there must be education to prove the cause worth while. The petition in the Litany which prays, 'In all time of our tribulation, in all time of our prosperity, Good Lord, deliver us,' needs to put more emphasis on the second condition than on the first. Times of prosperity tempt to fatty degeneration of the soul. Times of adversity make the Church Militant smaller but mightier. Erasing the camp followers — or, better yet, the camp-following concept — from nominal members' hearts will galvanize the churches to new effectiveness.

3. A deprofessionalizing of religion will come. Dean Inge says that in most people's minds God stands as the head of the clerical profession. Religion itself has seemed too often merely the technique of ecclesiastics. One does not need to belong to the Oxford Group to know that moral rearmament is the business of every convinced layman. Enthusiasm and gratitude for a faith that is known by its works will surely be kindled in and by informal witness. The recanonization of religion must come from the rediscoverers of its realities.

4. The Church's duty and policy must be education, and more education. Counsels of perfection are not enough in ordinary lives. Repeating 'Four! Four! Four!' is not as effective as providing two and two for us to add up ourselves. This chaotic world is now learning, or will soon learn, that selfishness produces intolerance, despotism, bitterness, exploitation, economic injustice, chicanery, antisocial criminality, war, and general catastrophe. Is it visionary to believe that we cannot ultimately be content with the kind of world such things have spawned? If there are even a minority holding fast to Christian essentials, the hour of their faith will come. And substantial underwriting will spontaneously follow new understanding.

THAT WAS A HORSE RACE

BY SELDEN M. LORING

I

I REMEMBER how the setting sun's hot face glared through black shaggy pines on the ridge beyond Surry as I drove down toward the village, and remember too the sinking of my heart when the buggy dipped into the cool shadow which filled the valley. War Feather trotted faster, scenting journey's end, but to a supperless boy, who had so lately abandoned everything friendly and familiar, the gloomy twilight crept up across knees and chest and head like a strange dark river closing over me.

And heaven knows I was ill-equipped to swim alone. My father's long illness had gobbled up his estate and most of my savings until at the end my inheritance was little more than a clean slate, our oldest buggy, and War Feather to carry me to my new home. Or rather to a hoped-for home — hope built on a cautiously formal letter which, without risking one short word as to my zeal or character, 'begged to introduce young Daniel Wendell to Judge Shelton of Surry.' Whether the great man would accept me, however, was more chancy than a horse race, as my father used to say, so that altogether my spirits were at pretty low ebb.

War Feather may have felt my discouragement and hoped to lighten it, or maybe he yearned to enter new country in style. At any rate, when a tall chestnut horse whirled a shining buggy from a side road a few rods ahead, my black cocked his ears. The chestnut

shaved the grass bank on the turn, stepping out as though he carried the mail, and the yellowed leaves in the ditch flipped up to follow the spinning wheels. With a delighted snort War Feather jerked the reins loose in my careless hand and, like another flying leaf, took after the stranger at his best gait.

Warned by our sudden burst of hoofbeats that he was in for a brush, the chestnut's driver wasted no backward glance, but settled all his attention on the reins. And none too soon, either. With obvious pleasure his mount leaped into a powerful slashing stride that shouted speed to burn. A hundred yards we raced so, past the first houses of the village, and in those few seconds the chill wind and stinging dust and the double tattoo of trotting feet swept all my gloom away.

Now, from his testy grinding and tugging at the bit, it was War Feather's turn to fret; though he skimmed over that rutted road as fast as I ever saw him travel outside of a money race, he failed to thrust his black nose even with the stranger's wheels. The chestnut shook his blond mane in scorn — and that was more than my vain companion could stomach. He snorted in resentment, and then gave a little wicked jerk of his black ears and laid them flat.

I knew that signal. Not to speak ill of a friend, War Feather was only a horse. He raced to win, with no more regard

for rules or sportsmanship than the cheapest tout. My case was different, and I had no mind to debut in Surry by beating a local speedster unfairly, for in those days the trotting gait alone was counted honest going. So, before my angry mount could shift to his natural pacing stride, I twitched the bit to remind him of company manners and drew him down to a walk. Fuming with disgust, he blew and stamped while the chestnut dwindled to a speck up the darkening road.

Beside me a scornful voice drawled, 'You showed judgment, bub, though I do hate to see anyone knuckle under so quick.'

I glared at the thin, red-nosed loafer in dirty overalls who leaned his elbows on the hitch rail of a hardware store. 'A man don't get much business done if he brushes with every cob on the road!' I said. Aside from the slur on my game-ness, I was annoyed that traveling two hundred miles from home earned no more respectful salutation than 'bub.' Impressively I demanded, 'Can you direct me to Judge Shelton?'

The fellow grinned, bending to scrape his whiskered chin along an equally hairy arm. 'If you could've held on for a quarter mile you *might* ve caught the Judge.'

'Oh!' Though the chestnut had vanished, my disappointment was tempered with relief. 'Lucky I didn't beat him, then — might have soured him on me first-off.'

'I wouldn't fret none.' Amusement set him squirming inside the generous overalls. 'That *cob* ain't Maud S., but he's got considerable reputation locally. If you'd like to try again I can tell you where he went.' A toothless grin which suggested that I should want no more of that flyer's dust riled my green temper.

'Just to keep the record straight, mister, I pulled in to hold my horse to his gait; I spent a deal of time teaching it to him, and hate to see time wasted.

Anyway, from his blond mane and tail I judge that chestnut's a Lambert, and my father's Blackhawks can race any Lambert off his feet!' I turned my horse's head toward the scoffer. 'Meet one of them — War Feather.'

For a moment they eyed each other, the black wrinkling his lip, the man peering up at his forehead marked with a tapering white splash like an Indian feather. 'Good name,' he admitted, grudgingly. 'An' far as I can judge by sight, a cracking good horse.' His dim eyes lighted suddenly; he straightened from the rail. 'You aim to see the Judge to-night? Because you might have trouble following the way, with dark coming on, and all.' He hesitated, scratching his bony elbows, and coughed.

Truly the dusty road was now but a pale streak in the twilight except before the post office, where a boy had climbed to light the big lantern. The hot reek of oil drifted over us, and War Feather blew his nose. Somewhere near by the swish of a grooming brush blended with hushed singing. 'Tenting to-night . . . on the old camp ground.' When my loafer added his thin, dull whistle, War Feather turned his head to stare, for the fellow barely sounded the notes between pursed lips as my father used to do in thoughtful mood.

I had memories enough already, and shifted uneasily in the buggy. 'Is Judge Shelton likely to be back soon?'

'No, *sir!*' He winked at a huge ruddy moon just topping the pine ridge. 'He's drove down to Circle Pond with the rest of the boys.' Once more he coughed, scratched one shin with a gaping boot, and finally blurted, 'If you want, I can go along to *show* you the way.'

Since nothing about the scarecrow but his willingness recommended him, my first impulse was to decline the honor, especially as intruding business on an evening's sport would require delicate handling. On the other side, I knew from experience that 'the boys' would never quit driving while that moonlight

lasted, and I had traveled too long a road to bear another night's delay.

'Much obliged,' I said, cramping the wheel while he climbed in to settle back with a pleased brisk rubbing of wrinkled hands. With him came a lusty odor, mainly of rum, which confirmed my first judgment, but the die was cast and I lacked experience enough to turn him out again gracefully. 'My name's Wendell, from Vermont,' I mumbled as we started up the road.

'Stuart — Reb Stuart.' He favored me with a closer view of his barren gums. 'No relation to the General; the boys hung that tag on me when he was chasing us around Dixie.' The watery eyes feasted a moment on War Feather's easy stride, steady as the swing of a pendulum. 'God!' he sighed. 'I ain't rode behind a tiptop goer for ever so long, Mr. Wendell.'

From looks and flavor I could believe him to be little sought after by respectable horsemen, but the genuine yearning in his voice — and maybe the 'Mr. Wendell' — moved me to give him a taste of real speed. Not far from town, Opportunity appeared in top hat and pearl-buttoned box coat, the young blood therein sadly manhandling a peppery gray stallion who welcomed our challenge. With more courage than reason, it appeared; this time War Feather's trotting gait was enough to run them into the ground in a smart quarter-mile brush that boiled Reb Stuart into a fever of excitement.

'I gorry!' he screamed above the din of our triumphant hoofs. 'Take Shelton off his high horse with this flyer, will you?' He slapped my knee, hooting, 'I gorry, I want to see him eat dust for once, the old spread-eagle rooster!' and spraying my face worse than a sneezing horse.

Years of rebuff must have been gnawing him, since he went on praising and ranting in turn with such mad abandon that I was mighty relieved to reach Circle Pond at last.

II

The local gentry were out in force there, and the sight of gigs and buggies sweeping like swallows along the moonlit curve of road beside the shimmering water brought back my homesickness redoubled. Just so, at this hour, my father and his friends would have been out on the Mill Road testing their favorites for the hundredth time, shouting moth-eaten jests, then pulling up to breathe, to argue trotting strains and shoeing tricks — questions long worn threadbare yet never laid aside.

Beside a gaunt oak half a dozen rigs clustered on the dusty grass just off the road, one the new buggy and chestnut horse I had pursued in town. My heart tripped a little. Not brash enough to drive in among strange elders, I left War Feather standing while I walked over, hat in hand. 'Judge Shelton?' I asked, very dry of mouth.

The chestnut's driver ran his hand through already upstanding silvery hair and squinted down through the smoke of a short cigar gripped in massive jaws. Everything about the man was so impressive that, often and reverently as I had studied his picture, the reality unnerved me. Four years of waiting and working for this moment sent the chill sweat trickling down my ribs while I gulped, struggling to launch my carefully rehearsed introduction.

In that moment of taut silence the thin piping of the frogs sounded loud in the calm pond. On the road a springy white mare and a darker horse pounded by, neck and neck, the white's hatless driver chirping and twittering louder than the frogs. The dark horse broke suddenly to a racking half-trot, and at that flawed rhythm every head in the group swiveled toward the race. I held my tongue, knowing it was no time to bring up mundane affairs. With the rest I watched the driver settle his mount skillfully and regain even terms before they rounded the bend. Like

cadets at drill, all turned their faces back to me. The Judge relaxed, even smiled.

Before I could seize the ripe moment Reb Stuart snatched it away. 'Evening, Judge!' he drawled, insolent in tone and attitude as he lounged beside me. 'This young gent claims you've bluffed long enough with your four-flush Flying Dutchman, an' he's here to make you fly the other way.'

For one torturing instant my heart stopped — the world stopped. No nightmare could conjure a more hideous introduction. Judge Shelton's moustache bristled and the bunching frown of his snowy eyebrows deepened when a rustle of laughter swept his friends like a breeze through dry corn.

'That's not what I came for!' I gasped. Mortification drove the prepared speech clean from my mind and left an aching emptiness. 'I want to study law —'

'I don't run a school!' The Shelton scowl fell impartially on me and my disreputable guide.

'No, sir — but I've hoped for years — if you'd let me read law in your office —' Taking time out to gulp for breath, I could have throttled Reb Stuart, or myself for bringing him. We must look a proper pair — my dusty, wrinkled suit, my dusty face and hair. 'I've been saving every cent —'

'I've given up taking pupils!'

The very repression of his outraged feelings should have told me there was no appeal from Cæsar. Groping in my black fog of disappointment, too late I tried the sensible opening. 'Wait, sir!' I fumbled through my pockets. 'Here's a letter!' His contemptuous snort warned me I was off on another wrong road and I bogged down completely.

Impatient of my awkwardness, the great man heaved an exaggerated sigh and stretched out his hand. 'I knew it! If ever a sponger came to me *without* fetching a letter from my lifelong friend,

Thaddeus B. What's-his-name, the shock might unseat my reason.'

Despair slackened the hobbles which hope and common sense had kept on my temper. 'Keep a grip on your reason, then,' I snapped, stuffing the letter back into my pocket, 'for here I am, Daniel Wendell of Vermont, to plead my own case.'

There was a split second when I thought some glint of respect softened the forbidding glare, but it died as Reb Stuart whistled. 'Quite a roarer, ain't he, Judge? Know what he said, back in town? Said his horse could beat any Lambert that was ever foaled!' The fool's laughter crackled like burning brush. 'An' that wa'n't a minute after your Dutchman left him behind.'

Not even surprise could ease the frown of those white brows. 'That was you chasing me?' From my fiery face he glanced to the grinning Stuart. 'If your judgment in horseflesh matches your taste in company, I take mighty little stock in it.'

Before the general laughter reached full growth a stoop-shouldered gray-beard killed it with his impatient squall. 'Judas priest, Edward! *Words* don't settle nothing!' He backed closer, his fat mare treading gingerly on the stubble. 'Maybe they do in court, Edward, but not on the road.'

'I'm not here to race,' I insisted stubbornly. 'I came to study law with you, Judge. My father wanted me to — and I —'

'Yah!' whooped Stuart. 'That's the same father that raised them unbeatable horses he brags on.'

There was nothing to be gained by further courtesy. I set my heel behind his and overturned him like an empty barrel. 'Get out of my sight!' I ordered with spirit enough to secure his obedience. And then I faced the delighted crowd. 'Just to keep the record straight,' I said between my teeth, 'what I told him was that any of our Blackhawks can run any Lambert off his feet.'

'God 'lmighty!' squealed the old man who had caught up Shelton before. 'Our Flying Dutchman's done better'n 2.30 a dozen times!'

'With a pacemaker and a downhill track?'

'*Right on this road!*'

'Don't blow, Henry!' growled the Judge, somewhat red of face. 'There's been too much of that already.'

'If you mean me,' I shouted, 'let me tell you —'

'I don't, son; every man is free to think his own horse fast.' He smiled around the group, smoothing away his anger. 'Isn't that in the Constitution?'

But his friends were less amiable. A flushed fat man in linen duster and silver spectacles pounded his whip on the floorboards. 'You can't let him bluff you that way, Ed! Take his crowbait's measure!' He aimed the whip at War Feather, who had followed me on to the grass and now stood chewing a wisp of it while he stared vacantly at the excited crowd.

'One white foot, inspect him,' chanted the fat man. 'Two white feet, reject him . . .'

Overwrought as I was, nothing could have riled me more thoroughly than that ancient jingle which ends, 'Four white feet, feed him to the crows.' Although our Hawks are marked so, back in Vermont we long ago silenced any jokes on that subject. My jaws ached from holding my tongue while I climbed into the buggy and pulled closer to the oak. 'Judge Shelton,' I said grimly, 'you are the only gentleman I can call by name, so I address *you*. Does Surry do all its racing by word of mouth?'

Once more the bushy brows drew together, but his wrinkling eyes stayed on War Feather, so that I could not tell whether he was further outraged by my rudeness or scanning my mount's points. At last he did look at me, and with something of that warmer light I had caught before. 'I'll oblige you, son.

You do need a lesson, and our last brush was too short for a fair test.' One gray-gloved hand turned the chestnut toward the road while the other stroked his formidable moustache. 'We've a nice run around the pond, here. Reckon it close to a measured mile. Finish at this oak.'

'Suits me.' If I copied his brusque tone it was to conceal my satisfaction at the proposed distance. The chestnut had already shown me speed that gave some color to their boast of '2.30 a dozen times' — but there is a world of difference between running against the clock and racing another horse. It clung in my memory that most Lamberts were rated as sprinters, too apt to lose courage if close pressed after the three-quarter mark; Blackhawks, on the other hand, were last-ditch fighters. Made bold by this advantage, even before it was put to proof, and being still hot with disappointment, I could not let well enough alone. 'Care to lay anything on the brush?' I asked, swinging my whip carelessly to belie a nervous tremor in my voice. 'I've near a hundred saved to start me in the law; if you won't take it that way, have a try at winning it.'

A roar of laughter from the crowd checked my heart in mid-beat. It seemed as though something more than my brashness tickled them. Covertly I studied the shining chestnut whose ears were cocked in anticipation. He was shod with a long toe in front, that new wrinkle for speed of which I had heard though I had yet to see it tested. From wet, twitching nose to whipping blond tail, he did look every inch a world-beater.

Unmoved by jibes or laughter, the Judge sat waiting, reading my flushed face with grave eyes. 'I reckon we've ridden you a mite hard, son,' he admitted with a little nod. 'But make allowances for home-town pride. I don't want your money.'

'Thanks.' Relief must have shouted

in the word; I had sweated for that money. And still I could not hold my tongue. 'But suppose I won yours.'

'You won't. I know what you're up against.'

Thank heaven I had sense enough left to appreciate the man who would dare ridicule from his friends by letting off a fresh youngster crying for a lesson. I swallowed hard. 'Thank you, Judge Shelton. For four years I thought I wanted to study law with you, and now that I've met you I'm sure of it. Whatever you say, I'll call on you tomorrow to discuss it further — and every day after that, until you agree.'

No doubt his life spent in estimating character in court made it easy for him to read my stubborn nature. At least he wrinkled his face and chewed the cigar with every appearance of belief — and corresponding distress. Then his eye brightened; he slapped his knee. 'Look here, son,' he beamed. 'I will make a wager. If you win, I take you into my office. If you lose — you never mention the matter again.'

The shock of it threw me into such a fever of hope renewed that I almost missed the smothered laughter from the crowd. Whatever the secret jest, they were in on it. He must be almighty sure of his Flying Dutchman's speed — or mighty proud. Or else — but it was unthinkable that Judge Shelton could have any underhanded plot for my defeat; so unthinkable that my ears burned when I dared to mumble, 'I don't suppose there's any rough spots to watch for on the road?'

'Smooth as silk.' Again he smoothed his own graceful white moustache, ignoring someone in the group who stifled a laugh or a cough. 'We keep the holes filled and leveled off,' he explained. 'Otherwise we let nature take its course.' His mount stamped impatience. 'Are you ready?' At my nod he shook the lines, and the Flying Dutchman stepped out swiftly along the moonlit road. War Feather lunged against the bit and

squealed in protest; I let him go. The crowd yelled as we sped side by side toward the first turn.

III

To give the Judge his due, win or lose he wasted no time in beginning my education. Along with the never-failing thrill of a brush, all that had gone before so flustered me that I forgot we were to trot around Circle Pond and so were actually racing on an oval track. 'A cool head beats a fast horse,' my father used to say. I realized the truth of it when I saw that my seasoned rival had appropriated the pole position.

Not content with that advantage, coming into the bend at the foot of the pond he let the chestnut travel wide and thereby forced me to choose between swinging dangerously near the outer ditch or falling back. Lesson Number Two: behind a trotting horse a judge is sharp as any jockey. To be sure, another choice was open — and one to bring an early test of rival nerves. Remembering my father, who would not give way to a four-horse drag, I settled lower in the wide hollow his weight had moulded in the shabby leather cushion and held War Feather squarely to the middle of the curving road.

Without taking my eyes from him, I yet glimpsed the chestnut's sleek shoulder edging nearer and nearer. The silver mountings on his harness snapped off sparks of moonshine with every stride — beside me a high spiderweb wheel whirled like a warning rattler — and then in the same instant Shelton loosed the mad bellow of a prodded bull and I heard the pistol crack of shattering hickory. A splintered spoke buzzed through the dust past my shoulder, but from its glistening varnish it was not mine. The chestnut veered off, broke into a springy gallop — and War Feather trotted swiftly into the lead with the white road clear ahead and the moon

a smiling silver goal beyond the high black lacework of the treetops.

The thrill lasted no farther than around the foot of the pond, for Judge Shelton caught his Dutchman out of the break in a few yards and came drumming up on the outside as though we were tied. The streaming blond mane pushed alongside; then a blurred wheel; then the Judge, jaws set tight as a trap, but gray gloves fingering the reins as delicately as though he handled eggs. For a hundred breathless yards outraged pride lent my black a power I had not hoped for so early in the race, and he matched the chestnut stride for furious stride while the dust boiled up and the dark trees flitted by in a whistling rush.

Halfway down the backstretch Shelton's fingers lifted a little on the lines. Somehow that chestnut demon let out another link of speed, and no Blackhawk ever foaled could have held him off. War Feather tried; he lowered his head and drove against the bit until, fearful that he might travel over himself and break, I moved the lines gently. He shook his head, flinging off foam that stung my face, but he answered, holding his steady gait and putting every last ounce of muscle into every stride.

For all that, the chestnut moved smoothly clear of his flank, clear of his shoulder, and at last drew away into the lead, skimming above his own inky shadow on the white road like some magic flying machine, while his driver sat erect, square-shouldered, and triumphant, wild silver hair rippling in the wind. I took what comfort I could from having given the Dutchman a taste of our nerve and speed that he might remember in the last-quarter burst and watched the legal team pull a full length ahead.

More than that I dared not risk now that my future was on the hazard. I clucked to War Feather, and, since he was of the same mind, we chased my prospective tutor grimly down the quarter mile of backstretch where the

dust leaped out behind the chestnut in whizzing waves to break against my black's pelting feet. With his rival behind him, that Lambert ran to crack all records, his ears laid back to his head and his whole shining body stretched out long and low.

'They don't pay the prize money on form, though!' I muttered, looking impatiently ahead as we whirled around the upper end of the pond. Beyond the Judge's streaking rig the road swung into the last quarter-mile straightaway where I meant to make my bid. I shortened my grip on the lines, braced my feet, and drew a deep breath — and then let it go in a gasp of despair while all my newborn hopes shriveled and died away.

'We level the road,' the Judge had smiled, 'but otherwise let nature take its course.' And his friends had laughed.

A hundred yards ahead a steep raw bank of stones and gravel forced the track close to the alders rimming the pond — so close that the right of way squeezed to a strip. A smooth strip, as the Judge promised, sleek as a pine table, but so narrow that a single buggy would fill it to the drooping branches on either side. By the bright moon I saw how the tracks of many wheels converged and melted into one beaten trail, saw how it reached clean to the dead oak at the end, and understood at last the Shelton confidence and the crowd's sly merriment. A Blackhawk's finishing drive was useless here; barring a miracle or a stroke of apoplexy, the horse first into that quarter-mile chute must come out first at the wire. And the Flying Dutchman a length ahead. . . .

A little shiver rippled the wet black skin of my rushing mount, and his ears lifted and twitched. Perhaps he sensed the threat of that narrowing road — but, knowing War Feather well, I think it more likely that he had grown heartily sick of trailing a fancy-gaited upstart from the Lambert clan. His black ears dropped close to his dusty mane.

Dully I recognized the signal — but

who was I to dictate gait and manners when my own were so awkward? There was no longer need to make a good impression in Surry; I should be moving on tomorrow. For tonight — Judge Shelton had tricked me, a stranger in a strange land; now let him try his wits against my only friend, a dumb four-footed friend whose creed was 'Run to win, and devil take the rules!' I held the lines motionless, and held my breath.

Not the tiniest split second did the big black horse squander in hesitation. Without hitch or falter he glided from his fastest trot into the swifter pacing stride he was born to, his long legs reaching and thrusting with the speed and power of a locomotive's drivers. As though a great wave lifted us the buggy rose and surged ahead, and through the haze of dust and blizzard of gravel the Shelton rig slid back at us. In a dozen giant steps War Feather's head was at the Judge's elbow; a dozen more and it was at the chestnut's girth, and the thunder of eight battering hoofs rolled together like an army's drums.

Shelton wasted no glance at us. I saw his face flush angrily and the gleam of his own bared teeth as he worked the bit desperately in the chestnut's frothing mouth. Here was one Lambert that was an exception to the rule; far from wilting, that Flying Dutchman rolled a red-rimmed eye at us and clung bravely to his frenzied gait — seemed indeed to increase it by sheer courage. But it was not enough; all the strength and skill of horse and man were helpless to halt that dark shadow sweeping past. As we flashed between the first crowding trees War Feather swerved in ahead.

With the harsh spatter of leaves against our wheels he shifted once more into his breakneck trot to whirl me down

the homestretch with the Dutchman's snorting breath hot on my neck. I saw the crowd tumbling from their rigs to line the finish — saw them freeze in grotesque attitudes of amazement when my black burst out of the shadows into broad moonlight, and behind them a solitary figure dancing the triumph of Reb Stuart. Past the oak we rocketed, and I drew War Feather slowly down, turned him, and trotted back to face Judge Shelton and his friends.

For a long moment of incredulous silence they stared from my sweating mount to the panting Dutchman, and I waited, heart in mouth, for the verdict. The Judge drew a silk handkerchief from his hip pocket and mopped his dust-caked face.

'Son,' he choked out, his voice held quiet with a visible effort, 'you — you've got a fast horse! I — I — ' And then in a rush of indignation he bellowed, 'By Judas priest! I wouldn't have *believed* it!' Sighing, he replaced the handkerchief and fixed me with a suspicious eye. 'I thought I had you! You didn't resort to any sharp practice, did you?'

I wiped my own sweating face. 'I started learning from you, Judge Shelton, when you swung wide on the first turn. This was a horse race, sir — not a court trial.'

His sheepish grin acknowledged the dig. 'You win — and you start reading law in my office Monday morning. I have hopes of you, son.' And then, with narrowed eyes, 'So you did pull something tricky?'

'Honestly, sir, I didn't so much as lift a finger.' When I smiled at the secret truth of that, his bushy eyebrows bristled. Hastily I added, 'I followed your example, Judge — I just let nature take its course.'

AMERICAN NOVELS: 1939

BY BERNARD DEVOTO

I

THE second year after the Armistice that interrupted an earlier World War saw the publication of Sherwood Anderson's *Poor White*, Floyd Dell's *Moon Calf*, John Dos Passos's *One Man's Initiation*, Scott Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise*, and Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street*. That was 1920; Mr. Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio*, Mr. Cabell's *Jurgen*, and Miss Glasgow's *The Builders* had appeared in 1919, Miss Cather's *My Antonia* in 1918. The principal occupations of American fiction during the next decade, one would think looking back on those novels today, ought to have been clearly discernible by the end of 1920. Criticism failed to discern them, however, as anyone may see who will look up the December summaries, and even if it had been able to deal prophetically with these novels there was not, in 1920, any portent of Mr. Hemingway and Mr. Faulkner, who had become important novelists when the decade ended. And if we move forward to 1926, when their first novels were published (*The Sun Also Rises* and *Soldiers' Pay*), there is still no omen of James Farrell or of the change in Mr. Dos Passos's work signaled by *The 42nd Parallel* which was to make him, with Mr. Farrell, a dominant figure during the 1930's.

It would have been still more difficult to predict the future in 1914, the year when Europe went to war: Theodore Dreiser's *The Titan* and Joseph Hergesheimer's *The Lay Anthony* seem diagnostic now but hardly seemed so then.

In 1917, when the United States went to war, Mr. Hergesheimer published his best novel, *The Three Black Pennys*, and Mr. Cabell's second period opened with *The Cream of the Jest*. The forces that would shape the fiction of the twenties are not apparent in them.

This catalogue suggests that it is a waste of time to guess what American fiction will be like when the new war ends (if the writing of fiction survives) on the basis of what it was when the war began. Nevertheless there is a certain piety in stating what it was in 1939; one sets up a monument which may serve as a point of reference and orientation later on. Whatever novels of 1939 may prove in 1945 to have been such an unregarded omen as Mr. Dos Passos's slight war novel was in 1920, and whatever novelists of 1950 are still unpublished in 1939 as Faulkner and Hemingway were in 1920, three novels fairly represent what American fiction was in the year when Europe resumed its war, the last year when America remained ignorant how far it would have to go to war.

II

The best novel of 1939, John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, has been both praised and denounced in terms that will seem extravagant a year from now. It has been overpraised, on the whole, and it has been praised for some qualities that will be recognized as weaknesses when we are as far away from it

as we are from, say, *The Sun Also Rises*. Nevertheless it is the mature work of a man who is both a born novelist and a disciplined artist, and its success is a literary phenomenon which reveals something important about the state of fiction in 1939. That so fine a novel should be so popular is important, but more important is the fact that its popularity signifies a triumph of pure fiction. For though the implications of Mr. Steinbeck's book are revolutionary, as a novel it is conservative and even classical. Its challenge to the status quo certainly interests its readers and its long exposition of injustice certainly fascinates them, but both challenge and exposition rest upon a common base, the primary fact that readers are moved by the book and are moved not by its thesis but by the lives of its characters. They are moved by the lives of the Joad family — by what the Joads do and feel, by what happens to them.

The widespread comparison with *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is inaccurate. Doubtless many readers have been so harrowed by Mr. Steinbeck's book that they have wanted to do something about the economic system that exploits his characters, as many of Mrs. Stowe's readers wanted to do something about slavery. But the economic system, which Mr. Steinbeck hates as much as Mrs. Stowe hated the slave system, is not a character in his book, whereas slavery was the principal character in hers. It was, in fact, the only life in her novel; her whites and blacks, her overseers and children, were illustrations of a theorem, manipulated with the assent of the reader through an apologue. Mr. Steinbeck does not personify the object of his hatred or illustrate his theorem; he does not write an apologue. He begins at the other end: his novel is a drama of events occurring in the lives of people. The book is judgment, propaganda, and manifesto all in one. But they emerge as consequences of the drama, not as its text.

If there has ever been a 'proletarian' novel, *The Grapes of Wrath* is one, but it controverts the theories decreed for proletarian fiction by left-wing critics while there was still a literary left — before the wane of fashion and the interior stresses of American Stalinism had destroyed it. Critics of the left set up criteria which amounted to a set of specifications for fiction; they were specifications of content, and proletarian novels were to be appraised by them. The answer in theory has been reaffirmed by Mr. Steinbeck in practice: not the orthodoxy of its contents, not the class struggle, dialectics, or a prayer for the dictatorship of the proletariat, but the vitality of its characters and the reality of what happened to them, would determine the worth of a proletarian novel, as of any other. One brought *Les Dieux Ont Soif*, *Vanity Fair*, *Pollyanna*, and *The Scalp Hunters* to that simple basis of judgment, and one would have to judge in the same way any novel by an editor of the *New Masses*. If you wanted to develop proletarian fiction your first step was to find some good novelists. And a good novelist is one who can impart the illusion of life to the imaginary creatures who are his characters.

What happens to the characters of a novel must matter to the reader — that is the primary condition of fiction, an art whose illusion consists of the belief that historical events are happening in space and time to actual people. This primary condition is drama, or, if you prefer, it is story, whether the drama be physical, mental, or spiritual. Whatever matters for the novelist — idea, vision, moral, class struggle, love, tragedy — can matter for the reader only as he makes it matter by dramatizing it in the lives of his characters. If a novel has that drama, then there may be added unto it whatever the bounty of providence may have given the novelist. If it lacks that drama, whatever blueprints may have been set up for it, whatever the novelist's aspiration may be, what-

ever symbolism he may use and whatever convictions he may have, it will remain something other — and something less — than fiction. *The Grapes of Wrath* is fine fiction because it is the drama of events happening to the Joads, of the Joads taking part in events; they live, therefore, and what happens to them matters so tremendously that many times the reader is at the limit of his endurance.

Before this book one was not sure about Mr. Steinbeck. He had had two kinds of success, a popular kind in *Of Mice and Men* and the more esoteric kind represented by private editions, small presses, and the approval of coteries. The best case that could be made out for him, however, rested not on these but on *In Dubious Battle*, a good but not weighty novel about a strike, and on *Tortilla Flat*, which had even less mass but more clearly promised the abundance of *The Grapes of Wrath*. The short stories which created his coterie reputation were the journeyman work of an artist trying out his versatility. Some of them were excellent, but others betrayed a tendency that has destroyed a good many American novelists; they were foggy with a mysticism that was presented as poetic emotion but might turn out to be mere vagueness and emptiness.

Of Mice and Men suggested an even more serious danger. Fiction does not ask that every novel have moral ideas, but it does require of every novelist that such moral ideas as he has shall be both intelligible and worthy of respect — if they are not, the emotions associated with them cannot be valid. And the moral values in *Of Mice and Men* were trivial; worse, they were confused; worse still, they were false. They confused disease with tragedy (which is Thomas Wolfe's mistake also); they asserted that *folie de touche* proves a defect in the moral order; and they therefore invoked on behalf of Lenny emotions which were false to the point of senti-

mentality. They begot a serious doubt about Steinbeck's future work.

That doubt has been dissipated by *The Grapes of Wrath*, whose moral standards are clear, firm, and righteous — and without meaning apart from the lives of the Joads. Qualities that were suspect in his short stories have persisted, however, and must be noted here though they have produced no serious blemish on the book. The much-discussed concluding scene is an error of judgment. The trouble with it is not that others have used the same device before, nor that, as Mr. Herschel Brickell has pointed out, it does not offer a usable solution to the economic problems of the time. The trouble is that it strikes a false and sentimental note at the end of a novel which up to that point has existed in an emotional medium as pure and affecting as any in our literature. It is symbolism gone sentimental, and it confuses the stuff of poetry with the stuff of fiction. So does the mysticism put in the mouth of Jim Casy the preacher, the one character in the book whom one does not accept. There is no necessity for a character to understand his own ideas and emotions, but there is an imperative necessity for his creator to understand them. And one carries from the book a suspicion that Mr. Steinbeck does not understand Jim Casy's mystical groping, that he has tried to fill a gap in his own understanding with a blurred poetry which no one else can understand. It is a constant temptation to novelists to suggest portentousness by writing vaguely, to try to press beyond knowledge with the devices of poetry.

The same tendency appears in the inter-chapters that break up the story of the Joads. They were necessary because no one could have stood the painfulness of the story without some tranquillizing relief. But there are too many of them, they get to be too long, and one ends by skipping them. They are most effective when they dramatize their theme in a

lunchroom or a camp in the dumps; they are most ineffective when they sing the theme in poetic prose. Few lines in literature are fixed, but if any is it is the boundary between poetry and prose, and novelists can cross it only at a loss. Like many other novelists, Mr. Steinbeck is a fine poet, but like the others he is less a novelist when he looses poetry on his page.

All this, however, merely says that, thank God, there are no perfect novels. *The Grapes of Wrath* is the year's best novel because it has the most abundant life; one is so engaged with the lives of its people that their experience becomes one's own. When that can be said of any novel there is little point in saying more. Style, technique, the many skills of fiction, are inseparable from content. But it is reassuring that in 1939 the most significant novel came out of the central tradition of fiction.

III

Even more than Thomas Wolfe's earlier novels, *The Web and the Rock* is a collaboration between author and publisher. The first half of it reads as if it had been written to the publisher's specifications in order to support the second half, and the second half was admittedly assembled by the publishers from a larger bulk. This arbitrary organization makes criticism reluctant, and reluctance is increased by Mr. Wolfe's death and his tragic unfulfillment. But that unfulfillment is the one important problem that criticism must discuss in relating him to the fiction of his time.

For *The Web and the Rock* confirms what *Of Time and the River* had already established: that the intensity of Wolfe's desire to make fiction out of his experience was not matched by his ability, that the fury which drove him could not be disciplined into art, and that apart from fury he had only a commonplace endowment as a novelist. *Look Home-*

ward, Angel, his first novel, manifested an intermittent and fragmentary ability to realize the vision in fiction. That was his promise. But in *Of Time and the River* both vision and realization had diminished; they were swamped in fury and bad prose. That diminution is progressive in *The Web and the Rock*, which in the last third abandons all other objectives and becomes merely a documentation of insanity that seldom troubles to assume the appearance of fiction. It is clear that Wolfe could never have overcome the forces of disintegration; they had already defeated him. The memory of his promise and the tragedy of his defeat will remain. He will go down in our literature as a tormented soul, like Herman Melville, whose books will provide psychology and literary scholarship something of the same attractive hunting ground that Melville's do. But they are much less important than Melville's and their failure is much less mysterious. And regret for an artist's failure to attain greatness has never yet made a work of art great.

It is true of many novelists, perhaps of most novelists except first-rate ones, that they can make the childhood of imagined characters more real than their maturity. The probable reason is that the novelists' own childhood was more real to them than maturity — that minor fiction is frequently a form of infantile fixation. The best parts of Wolfe's work are nearly all to be found in the boyhood of Eugene Gant and of the George Webber who is distinguished from Eugene only by name. It is there that frenzy most often forges the objective symbols of fiction and becomes a drama of human experience, of people living with one another in a world where events occur. It is a child's world, however, and Wolfe never gets out of it. The dreads and ecstasies throughout his work are a child's dreads and ecstasies. The figures that move across his stage (when there is a stage, when they do

move) are a child's magnifications, images seen by eyes that must forever look upward to enormous, distorted, inhuman creatures which are not understood, which remain monstrous. The motives attributed to them are a child's baffled interpretation of how adults think and feel; the judgments passed on them express a child's standards. The America about which Wolfe felt so vehemently remains a child's countryside and nation. (Compare it with an adult's America, Mr. Steinbeck's.) What he gives us is a child's-eye view. He was a giant, but he was a giant child.

His violent emotions, the ether in which his books exist, are simple, superficial, and in the end empty. He had an eager, loving recognition of many facets of American life. He understood, as more sophisticated novelists sometimes fail to understand, that baseball and fishing, livery stables and boys' gangs, the Dempsey-Firpo fight and small-town superstitions, are important to Americans. But he could not tell what their importance is; their significance always turns out to be that of something that is said to or felt by a child. The inability does not matter when George Webber is frightened by the cruelty of other boys, — it is right that a boy's terror shall be, in one of his favorite adjectives, nameless, — but it is paralyzing when the adult George Webber falls in love with an adult woman. This love affair is the exclusive occupation of the second half of *The Web and the Rock*; it extends through more than three hundred pages; it is, in words, the most tortured love affair our fiction contains. But it does not press through words to experience, it never comes alive. It is related in furious language, but for all its goat cries and bitten haunches, for all its innumerable curses and insults, it remains just language. The torture is verbal; the man and woman are not tortured, for they do not live; the reader is tortured by the length of their ordeal in prose, not by its reality. One is no more moved by them

than by the twelve-sheet posters of a movie advertisement. They have a vast area, but no depth.

They do not live — and that is the failure of Wolfe's work. Nor does the failure result solely from the immaturity of his understanding; he had other, equally fatal insufficiencies. He was a solipsist; no experience but his own was real. Like Eugene Gant, George Webber sees terrible things happen to other people. But they are terrible because they cause terror in Webber, not because other people suffer. Wolfe has said repeatedly that his drive was to absorb the world and then reproduce it; but he does not absorb the world, he only confuses it with his own world-hunger; and he does not reproduce the world, but only his own frenzy. At the end of both *The Grapes of Wrath* and *The Web and the Rock* one feels a tragic pity. But the pity which *The Grapes of Wrath* evokes is pity for the Joads, whereas one does not pity the people of *The Web and the Rock*, who have not lived. One pities not their suffering but their author's.

And the catalogue is not yet complete, for he was under the further handicap that he could not impose on the material that obsessed him the elementary forms of fiction. He could tell us that life is dread, that life is fury, that the world is beautiful and terrible, that men are passionate and terrified and preyed on by longing and despair, that America is many-voiced and billion-footed. They are not new nor particularly penetrating messages, they are essentially an adolescent rhetoric, but the intensity with which they are announced might have given them importance if they had been forged into drama. But they are only infrequently and imperfectly raised from rhetorical assertion into a realization of people whose lives are engaged with one another. He tells us many times about some never understood evil in Southern life; the very repetition shows that he had some idea which one may associate with William Faulkner's mystical but

nevertheless dramatized vision, but it is only in an occasional passage that a Negro goes berserk or the poor-white boys draw knives. The rest is rhapsodic language, not experience. He tells us equally often about an evil in the life of the metropolis; the very repetition shows that he had some idea which one may associate with James Farrell's slums, but it is never wrought into such a drama as Studs Lonigan's wasting life. It remains a statement, many pages long and made through a megaphone, that George Webber walked in the city and felt bad about it.

Is there much to him besides frenzy? If you strain out the whirling agony of words unshaped in character, whose exact designation is cyclothymia, there is left nothing that would distinguish him from scores of mediocre novelists. He is fury and little more. Now the representation of fury is a proper occupation for fiction in our era; but it is not representation that we get from him, it is pure fury untransformed. His books are its conduits, not a significant form imposed on it by art, not its projection in human life.

Again one need only turn from *The Web and the Rock* to *The Grapes of Wrath*. Steinbeck is always a novelist in a way that Wolfe is only briefly and incompletely. Fiction is for him the thing happening to the people he is writing about; in Wolfe's book the thing seldom happens — it is announced, described, chanted, yelled, trumpeted, but not realized. A page of Steinbeck is, to use a dramatist's word, *scene*: people saying and doing and feeling things in the world of experience. A page of Wolfe is typically Wolfe himself gloating or mourning in private about something which he tells us has happened, something which he usually neglects to make happen, something furthermore which usually has no bearing on the people of his book. But fiction is the people of the book and what happens to them. So in the outcome the Joads break one's heart,

while George Webber and his mistress and his sinister enemies leave one untouched. The tragedy attributed to Webber by assertion is, in outline, quite as harrowing as that of the Joads, but it remains an assertion; it is not realized in fiction as theirs is, and so it is without power.

Wolfe's life was tragic, but it would be unfortunate if his death should create the myth that a great artist died unfulfilled. Admirers of his books who are now working at such a myth are doing a disservice to young writers and the future of our fiction. He had intensity, a great vehemence, a splendid dedication to his work, and till this last book a noble, affirmative belief in the worth of life. All those qualities should be praised and will remain an inspiration to novelists. But he found no way to focus his intensity, he never developed enough craftsmanship to work his private world into fiction, his ideas and perceptions remained those of a child, and he had little to say about human experience. The torment he lived was pitiful, but his books are a disintegration. Praise of them is a betrayal of literature. For fiction is an art: it must begin by shaping the raw stuff that is without shape and by suffusing it with life; it has no meaning, nor even existence, except as it contrives to make imaginary people seem alive and what happens to them seem important.

IV

It is a striking fact that something like half of the novels which, in the last few years, have had either a wide sale or widespread critical approval have been historical novels. Part of this mode is just what it was in the days of *Janice Meredith*, romantic escape, but only a small part — for the world of today is almost as much with us in historical fiction as in Mr. Steinbeck's books. Part of the increased interest comes from our enhanced nationalism, simply as honest, tub-thumping self-righteous-

ness, more complexly as a troubled curiosity about the roots that have blossomed in our time. More important is the fact that the current desire for 'social' (read 'sociological') fiction can be more plausibly satisfied in the simplified past than in the confused present. The historical novel of the day is commonly a stern, often a too stern, examination of social forces working in past time. Finally, the past has a strong attraction for the novelist because he knows how it came out; he is sure of it; it gives him a continuity that the present denies him. Yesterday's pattern is finished and therefore meaningful; today's fades into the question mark of tomorrow.

Of late years, that is, the historical novel has tended to conform to the prevailing styles of fiction; it has been realistic, psychological, and sociological. Even the enchanted province of our national nostalgia, the pre-Civil War South, has been corrupted from within; though such loyal fantasists as Margaret Mitchell and Stark Young have worked in the traditional honeysuckle, resolute like James Boyd, Caroline Gordon, Allen Tate, Andrew Lytle, and Clifford Dowdey have been assaulting the romantic myth with a realistic social thesis. One area of dream and regret has remained, however; realism has not hitherto crossed the Missouri River. The Western frontier has remained the frontier of fantasy; the scent of sagebrush has been as romantic as that of honeysuckle. What fiction has chosen to see through the arch of a Conestoga wagon has been one more faery land, where d'Artagnan's cousins are branding steers and washing gold. This appealing convention has produced one of our most durable native literary forms. But at last the convention has been violated, realism has crossed the frontier, and the late Southern monopoly has been broken — some of the American past, it develops, occurred on free soil after all. Mr. Vardis Fisher's prize-winning novel,

Children of God, is nearly as long as *Gone with the Wind*; it penetrates a thousand miles beyond the Missouri, all the way to Great Salt Lake; and no one is likely to complain that it is romantic.

The book is unwieldy, heavy, and marred by a recurrent ineptness. Mr. Fisher lacks Mr. Steinbeck's economy of line and detail; his story is dangerously long and awkwardly put together. His prose is undistinguished; at best it fulfills its function without adorning it, like Sinclair Lewis's; at worst it is rigid, hollow, and tiresomely verbose. His history is so literal that for long stretches the imaginative leavening seems to have been left out. His emphasis on the development of the Mormons as a social body slights the religious energies that formed and sustained them, so that God's children seldom seem to be the creatures of God's apocalypse which they actually were, tossed by the glories and tumult of the last days.

But the book's vitality silences such objections as these. It tells one of the great stories of American history, the rise and migration of the Mormons, and tells it by means of a remarkable diversity of characters who live in their own right. Appropriately the full-length figures of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young dominate the others, and of these Young is much better done, but they are supported by, literally, scores of figures that cover the whole extent of Mormon experience throughout a period of more than sixty years. The result is something very uncommon in American fiction: the Mormons come to live in the reader's awareness as a people.

Now this is a formidable achievement. Criticism has talked copiously about a theoretical form called the 'group novel,' but, in American literature particularly, specimens have been hard to find. Here is the thing itself. What anyone who reads the novel will remember longest is a lively impression of a whole people existing as a people, the 'peculiar people' of Mormon idiom — a group which has a

life of its own, a group from which the significance of every individual life is derived. That is the mass experience at which criticism has repeatedly told the group novel it must aim. That experience would be quite impossible here except that, straining them laboriously through his stiff prose and through his not too subtle perceptions, Mr. Fisher manages to endow a great number of individual characters with unmistakable life, a life of their own, an individual life. The novel is written without the pyrotechnical devices that Mr. Dos Passos uses; it is done with a slow brushwork that is commonplace and wholly traditional, a repeated flat statement of literal experience. It is seldom poignant or memorable in detail; the thing stated is seen in flat lighting, never irradiated; no passage has the heart-rending immediacy of any scene in *The Grapes of Wrath*. But the ultimate test of fiction proves its quality: Mr. Fisher makes you believe in this variegated company of characters as persons, makes them live as persons, and they in turn make the Mormons live as a people. The solid, slow, page-by-page effect is cumulative, and at the end one has a lasting belief in greater common life of the Church to which the humble lives belong. That is the important attribute of a distinguished novel.

It is distinguished and it gives Mr. Fisher a stature he had not had before. He here has the support of a great theme which he will not easily find again, but *Children of God* makes him a novelist of importance. It also displays a victory over forces strikingly like those that defeated Wolfe. His earlier work included several quite bad novels, a bulk of autobiographical dissertation, and a tetralogy comparable to Wolfe's novels in both length and personal fury. The welter of psychological data in the tetralogy is neurotic rather than psychotic, the prose is less rhapsodic than Wolfe's, there is less violence, and less cosmic star-dust; but, though at its

wildest it has more form than Wolfe ever achieved, it is essentially the same kind of personal yell without reference to the external world. The new book does not prove that a chaotic ego can be translated into art, for it abandons the ego altogether, but it abundantly proves that a novelist with plenty of chaos in his ego can make a world, as Wolfe repeatedly failed to do. Mr. Fisher has found his fulfillment outside himself; there are few more objective novels in our literature. And if it does not solve the problem of imposing form on subjective material, it does high-light Wolfe's insufficiency. What would Wolfe have achieved if he had been able to write about the America he sensed, the Southerners he loved and feared, or even the literary parasites he despised, as objectively as Mr. Fisher writes about the Mormons?

V

If these three novels are representative of American fiction in the first war year, then the first thing to say is that technical experimentation had reached a pause in 1939. None of the three is an 'experimental' novel: Wolfe intended to work within the established forms, and the other two books are conventional to an extreme. Mr. Dos Passos's novel of the year abandoned not only his exterior decorations but even his interest in the mass-mind; it was a biography-novel as conventional in form as a Rollo book. Mr. Faulkner's *Wild Palms* essayed another of the *tours de force* expected of him; it was less eccentric than some of its predecessors and also less successful. Mr. Steinbeck's richness and Mr. Fisher's prodigality found the forms at hand adequate to their needs. Creativeness usually does; though it is the destiny of experimenters to prepare the means of expression for next generation's novelists, their experimentation usually masks some lack of the life-giving power.

All three novels are intensely American, intensely occupied with America,

though in *The Web and the Rock* the occupation is more intent than fact. Furthermore, the America described in both *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Children of God* is heroic; in both, men labor to the utmost to shape their destiny and live according to their vision. Both thus strike the familiar major chord of American fiction, but beyond the heroism they diverge. The lives of the Joads end in despair, but the novel they compose is resolute, positive, uncompromising. It is a courageous book, a book resolved on truth-telling and on more than that. It is, if you like, a portent of the greatest hopefulness; when fiction like this is being written, when novelists are resolved to exhibit with an insistence that cannot be ignored the evils they find in our nation, it may be that we are on our way to making evil less powerful here. But there is no such optimism in *Children of God*. The America it displays is an America forsaking its heritage, abandoning its dream, and declining to nonentity through paralysis of the will. Well, both tendencies were visible in the United States of 1939.

Europe exists in *The Web and the Rock* as one further backdrop for George Webber's madness, but has no other significance, and it does not exist at all in *Children of God* or *The Grapes of Wrath*. There is no oncoming; the war is not a part of anyone's thought or phantasy; the novels look backward through fiction's eternal past time on experience finished and appraised. They thus lagged, as serious fiction always does, behind the romances of the popular magazines, which began to report the new war in their familiar clichés before the autumn of 1939 was over. Spies and military villains spoke only German in the slicks, and there remained only the further step of putting Yankee uniforms on their captors. Serious fic-

tion, however, is not likely to take up the war till it is over and novelists can begin to analyze their experience of it. (Mr. Dos Passos's *One Man's Initiation* appeared in 1920. His *Three Soldiers* followed in 1921. Then came a flood of war novels so great that it seemed as if a young novelist must begin his career in art by completing his career in arms.) How far our fiction will concern itself with the new war, once it is finished, will depend on how far the United States gets involved in it, but some effort to deal with it is inevitable. Remembering what fiction has said about war during the last twenty years, one wonders whether anything new can be said; but the novel has existed for three centuries primarily on the assumption that something new can be said about love.

Yet, when the last war was over, the principal desire of our fiction was not to render account of the war but to examine American life more minutely, more realistically, and more skeptically than ever before. The net effect of the war was to bring our literature into closer touch with our experience; the true omens in the catalogue that begins this essay were the novels of 1920, and the most prophetic of them was *Main Street*. That impetus has lasted down to 1939; whether *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Children of God* are omens as pre-war novels, they are unmistakably post-war. If fiction comes back to them in 1942 or 1945, to take off again in a peacetime world (whatever that phrase may prove to mean), the American novel will be resuming an established tradition, not beginning a new one. They seem, in fact, a fruition of 1920; their authors were feeling more deeply about America and writing about it more maturely than their predecessors did two years after the last war was over.

TALES OF MY CHILDREN

BY HENRY WILLIAMSON

I

As the children grew bigger, the valley became a happy place, although always part of it was in shadow. Ceaselessly the sun rolled over from hill to hill; his work was everlasting. From the gazeless orb of brilliance energy poured down: magnificent to the earth, but a mere dwarf-yellow star of diminishing magnitude in stellar space. It was burning out.

Likewise the human mind, concentrated on one line of thought, was diminishing in energy and light.

Always the river was flowing, by which we walked and watched, and played. Never shall I forget that bright, clear water, into which I gazed from Humpy Bridge, pool side, and down from the branches of riverside trees.

One warm spring morning Windles and John watched the trout being turned into the river. How the fish leapt with joy at being free from the confining ice tanks! They were Scottish trout, from Loch Leven. They were greenish-blue, with black and yellow spots; whereas the native trout in the river were a golden-brown with black and red spots.

The first thing I noticed, as I stared through field glasses at the fish below, was that when the Loch Leven trout had been living a few weeks in the pool above Humpy Bridge their yellow spots turned red, and their bluish-green sides became tinged with golden brown as though they were turning into wild Devon trout. Windles and I used to stand on the

bridge and look at them as they lay in the clear water below. The summer sun shining down through the water lit every stone and speck of gravel, every wave of fin and curl of tail, every spot, every crimson opening of a gill cover as the fish breathed. Each fish had its regular place; it lay on the gravel, always head to stream, watching the water before and beside it for food floating down. The biggest fish had the best place; the next biggest had the next best place.

The natural food of the trout were the flies which hatched out of the water — not buzzing flies of the kind which bite or sting or are a nuisance in the house, but beautiful, gauzy-winged creatures which lived only a brief while, laid their eggs on the water at evening, and then fell spent, to float away, their brief aerial life over. In time the eggs they dropped out of their long slender triforked tails, or whisks, hatched, and became tiny creatures crawling on the gravel, some building themselves homes of sand-speck and bits of leaf and twig, others hiding in the water mosses and feeding on the little vegetables which grow on the gravel. These vegetables were very small, and looked to our eyes, as we knelt by the riverbank, like a thin brown slime on the stones, but to the creatures they were what a pasture is to grazing cattle. After living about a year underwater, the creatures turn into nymphs, which swim up to the surface, break out of their cases, and arise, very tremulously, as winged flies of the stream. They are

frail, delicate, fairy-like things, and live but a few hours. Often in summer we watched them dancing over the water as the sun was setting — they rose and fell as they dropped their eggs, dipping in the water and flying up again — until a ripple broke, and became a ring, and a trout had risen to take one.

I used to feel sad when I thought of these lovely, dreamlike creatures dying in the sunset of their one day of life, but after watching the river for a long time, and seeing how all life renewed itself, how the salmon returned from the sea and laid their eggs in the gravel, and died, and the little salmon hatched and fed on the nymphs, and went down to the sea, and returned again to the river of their ancestors, — spring, summer, autumn, winter, season after season like a wheel turning slowly round, the great stars of heaven wheeling in eternity, — it seemed to me, when I had watched this wheel of life turning, always the same complete turn every year, that all life and death made up the beauty of the river, which had flowed through the valley thousands of centuries before the children and I walked under the hills, holding hands and laughing and peering at the strange life of the river, the beautiful, limpid, shadow-dreaming Bray, the stream which would be flowing a thousand centuries after we were all forgotten.

Summer after summer we stood on Humpty Bridge and threw spoonfuls of food into the pool, and watched the trout coming down like torpedoes, each with its little bow-wave, and saw them slashing round with open mouths to take the food with heads upstream. Always they feed upstream, for the water has to be poured through the gills for a fish to breathe. Therefore a trout faces upstream, not only to watch for its natural food coming down, but for the flow of water to pass through its gills. How they leapt and splashed, under the showers of food! Big trout and little trout, samlets and even eels, all came to the daily

banquet. The curious thing was that while this food — which was like broken-up dog-biscuit meal — made the wild brown trout look like the greenish Loch Leven fish, the natural fly-food in the river made the Loch Levens resemble the native brownies! How did that happen? Obviously the color of the spots came from the kind of food the trout ate. Indeed, some of the Loch Levens, which went on upstream and lived entirely wild, looked after a few months exactly like the golden-brown, scarlet-spotted natives! Only by their shape could we tell the difference.

Windles was five when our first tame trout were put into the pool. He used to lead Baby John by the hand across the Deer Park, following me, and Baby John used to stand by the stone coping and always, his eyes wide and solemn, point towards the Railway Viaduct a mile up the valley and lisp, 'Sheed-er-shish? Dad-dad go sheed-er-shish?' He was too small to look over into the river, and one day as we stood there he became very excited, and said, 'Look, sheed-er-shish!' and lo, his idea of feeding the fish was a goods train passing on the viaduct of the Great Western Railway.

The next year John was just big enough to look over the bridge when standing on a special stone placed there for him. The fish remained in the pool during the winter floods, when the water ran too heavy and fast for us to feed them. They became thin, but some fattened again when spring brought nymphs and flies and the showers of food from the familiar figures on the bridge. Sometimes a salmon lived with them awhile, aloof and solitary, never feeding, waiting for the autumn and the spawning season, when its eggs would be laid. I used to see Windles and John creeping over Humpty Bridge, heads down, slowly to peer over into the water below. A fourth pair of eyes was trying to look over when another spring came round — Baby Margaret, led there by John while

Windles was at school. John used to grasp Baby Margaret round the middle, and struggle and strain to heave her up on the stone so that she could see Daddy's Tame Shishes. These trout were now three, four, and even five times as big as they were when we put them in the river. Always we missed one or two when a new spring came and we returned to feed them. New, smaller trout took their place — their children perhaps.

A heron speared the biggest fish one year, and we found it dying in the shallows. Perhaps otters took others. The little fingerlings of one year became the big ones two or three years later. Time flowed away as the water; it was always Now, always the same river, always the trout were there, waiting below for the showers of food during the summer.

Margaret was leading Baby Robert to the bridge to see the fish. Sometimes Rosemary came too; and then there were five small heads peering over as the spoonfuls were cast upon the waters.

Afterwards the children would undress in the sunlight, and with shrill cries of joy and excitement would splash about at the edge of the stream, while I lay still in the shallow water, on the golden gravel of the ford, watching the clear cold water foaming over my body, watching it whirling the sand-specks and scooping the stones in little waterfalls and eddies along my length, feeling myself and the children part of the great stream of life, and deeply content for the gift of being alive in the world.

II

But, alas, house life was not so easy as when the sun shone down on us. I was supposed to be growing up; I was now Father, with a capital F. 'Be quiet, babies! Silence, I say! Our Father's thinking!' hissed Windles, frowning terrifically upon them. The cottage, which had seemed so spacious when first we went there, was now too small. The sit-

ting room and the day nursery led one into another through a door with upper panels of glass. Once when I was sitting by the hearth, wondering what to do with myself, I saw five faces peering at me through the glass, two small faces at one end, or rather eyes and foreheads above fingertips pressing there. They vanished! Father must not be disturbed.

But in the open air this strange uneasy difference sometimes fell away, and I was one of them, Arkernoo, a person who provided all kinds of unexpected excitement. Arkernoo was a name originally invented by Rosie, and copied by the other children. Perhaps Windles, and his friend called Sleeboy, son of Farmer Slee, Dolly Ridd, John, and Margy, Harriet Bowden, Rosie, Robbie, and others, would be playing in the Deer Park, and the car would appear with the trailer hitched on behind, to get wood from one of the dumps in the park. 'Come on, get in, everyone!' 'Hurray, Arkernoo's come! Now for some sporty behavior!' cried Windles. 'Coo, I bet we whizz!' said John, pink-cheeked with quiet excitement. 'Yes, us'll whizz now, won't us, Rosie?' echoed Robert. 'Yes, us'll whizz now, won't us, Robbie?'

Across the grass the trailer swayed with its laughing, shouting cargo, and coming to a smooth place, where no ant-hills were, would accelerate, and go round and round faster and faster until all were shrieking with laughter. Or the engine would be stopped and the children chased; or a football match organized, and the wood forgotten. Father, thank God, was forgotten; I was one of them; I had got back, for a while, to the land of enchantment, of unself-consciousness, to the world of otters, deer, salmon, water, and moonshine — the only world in which perhaps there was consistency, form, integrity. Back again in the house, with letters, bills, type-scripts, contracts, the ever-pressing need to turn feelings into words, this world too often faded, and the children were

problems of noise, dirt, and even irritation — but never of resentment.

As they grew older, I saw how different the children were. John was the easiest-going. He was seldom put out, always adaptable. At seven years he was long-haired, soft-voiced, wide-eyed, ever ready to help anyone do anything. Solemnly he made cakes in the kitchen — real cakes, not mud pies or mere hardened lumps of dough — or laid the dinner table, helping with the washing up, writing his book of twenty-six chapters (*A-bout my Life*, by Mr. J. Williamson), and tending his garden (about one square yard). He helped make the beds, he took Rosie and Robbie for walks, he knitted a pair of socks for Sleeboy's baby brother, he held the net for me while I threw a fly upstream under the alders. Wouldn't he rather go away and play with the other boys? It must be dull for him waiting about while a water-absorbed fisherman, with catlike intentness, moved so slowly upstream, casting a red gamecock-hackle fly foot by foot higher in the runs and eddies. Oh no, said John, he liked carrying the net; he liked looking in the grass and seeing ants and spiders and 'other fings.' He was quietly happy, enjoying whatsoever he was doing.

Windles was restless, impetuous, imaginative. He came home from school one day in the twilight carrying something carefully in his hands. 'Look!' he cried, with a kind of possessive triumph in his voice. He held out a shoddy bundle of feathers from which depended white legs with clenched claws and lolling head. It was a barn or white owl, dead. Its eyes were glazed and shrunken.

'Did anyone shoot it?'

'I don't know. I found it just like that, in the Deer Park, lying on the grass,' he replied, a little anxiously.

'He wants to know if he can have it stuffed,' said Lætitia, gently, in my ear.

Taking it in the hand for examination, one noticed first of all its extreme lightness. Although the barn owl in flight

looks twice, and, in some lights, thrice the size of a pigeon, its body is no larger than a pigeon's. The pigeon is a fast-flying bird, with tight feathers; the white owl fans slowly over the mice runs in the grass and around the ricks and faggot piles. The pigeon's flight quills are hard and narrow; the owl's broad and soft, fringed with filaments of down which wave in the least breath of air.

They are the silencers of flight; an owl beating down the hedge at sunset is not heard even by mice. It has a mothlike softness, hovering and fanning with large dark eyes in a heart-shaped face peering down; the wings close and the softness becomes a powerful grip of talons. Mice are swallowed whole, after being killed with claw and beak. Later, bones and fur in a casting, or pellet, are ejected from the owl's crop.

Now how had this owl died? It had not been shot; its wings were not broken; its breast was white, although draggled. But how light it was, held in the hand — a few ounces only, a feathered skeleton.

'Look, Windles, at its legs. They're broken.'

The legs were about two and a half inches long, covered with short hairs of incipient feathers like silver wire. One leg appeared to be broken in the thigh. It was withered. The foot of the other leg was maimed; one of the toes was missing. The wound was half healed. The bird had died of starvation, after struggling in and escaping from a rabbit gin.

Standing with my little boy in the lane, the owl between us, I gave him an imaginary picture of its life since it had escaped from the gin. At first, wild fright and freedom: crooked and tottery, perching on an oak branch; falling off; a rest spread-winged in the grass below. Pain, bewilderment, glancing about in the grass for an unknown enemy. An owl's eyes were fixed; it could turn its head a whole circle on its neck. Hunger, and, after a painful take-off, to the air

again. A mouse moving below; descent and grip upon the shadow; the mouse escaping. The owl falling over, and flapping upright on useless feet, bewildered.

A very hungry owl, it would seek its barn or hollow tree, there to stare in pain throughout daylight, its great ears, hid under feathers, hearing the movements of wood lice, shrews, even worms in the leaf mould below. At sunset it would climb out laboriously and fly along its regular evening ways.

It would catch no mice. Always it would fall over as it tried to grip them, and flap upright again, and stare about it. There were no beetles or moths in the grass of winter for it to catch. It would begin to feel cold, in spite of its feathers.

At night the flashes of the Dog Star above our valley seem to liquefy in the north wind pouring from the high ground of Exmoor. Perhaps that thin skirling cry we heard coming from the direction of the farmer's haystack a night or two ago, when the constellations were so big and bright, was the death cry of this bird. We saw an owl flying strangely, do you remember, Winny? Wan and irresolute in the wind it passed, a white blur drifting and swaying; we saw it from your bedroom window, do you remember? The starlight made Farmer Slee's haystack and the hedge very clear. Perhaps the owl did not see the stars, for death is a darkening of the sight, the world fading away. On it flew, tumbling blindly and crying, to fall in the grass, and sleep away from the cold and the pain, until you found it and brought it home, this poor little ghost of a bird. Ah no, boy, it isn't fair to make you cry. Let's all go for a walk on Santon Sands tomorrow! All of us! It's Saturday; no school tomorrow, hurray! Shall we, Windles? John, Margy, how about a walk tomorrow?

'Shut up,' says Windles. Then, 'I don't want the owl. John can have it.'

'Coo, can I? Thanks, Windles.'

'No, Windles ought to get it stuffed,' I said. 'It's our family totem, the owl, and the eldest son shall have it to hang over his bed, with wings in flight. It will keep the rats out of your bed,' I said to Windles.

'Ha, ha, ha,' replied Windles, with hollow laughter.

III

It was amusing to watch how ideas became fixed in their minds. That summer was a brilliant season, with much heat. One morning I took my two-ounce rod from its stand in the hall and went trout-ing in the river. The air was oppressive. Fishermen had told me that trout were most susceptible to atmospheric pressure; it sent them, dull, to the bottom of the river. I thought I would test this for myself.

Over Exmoor, thunder was rolling. I felt the pressure on my head, on all my body. The river shone with a white grayness that hurt the eyes. The green of pasture and oak leaves had an extraordinary stillness. The valley light was underwater light.

Nothing was happening in air or earth or water. Life was static, stagnant. The heat lifted in bourdons of sound that traveled leagues, and returned to meet new shocks from the skies.

I realized that I was part of the suspended life. I stood at the edge of the run, at the edge of the fast water running into the pool.

My split-cane rod lay on the grass. The fly box was open in my hand. There was no energy to select another fly. Nor was there reason; nothing stirred.

For half an hour I had been moving upstream, throwing a hackled fly into all likely places. That was all.

Whiter and whiter the river had gleamed, as though it were oil moving there. The eyes were hurt by it. The sky was a vast slate quarry.

Even the horseflies, which during the past two days of subtropical heat had risen in thousands, were gone. Heavy-

winged and burring, they had flown to rest on alder leaf and bramble.

I was wrong; there was movement somewhere. I heard a cry.

A quarter of a mile upriver two small white figures were running on the bank. The children were bathing under the slight summer waterfall. Rod in hand, I walked slowly upstream.

It was now greenly dark. Violet flashes ran down the clouds above the lower slopes of the moor. A pheasant grated wildly in the tenebrous spruce plantations on the hillside.

A young sheepdog appeared along the cart track through the park, fleeing silent and fast, pursued by something we could not see.

Margy, deep brown of leg and arm and pale of body, skipped about in and out of the shallow water with John, whose fair slight body was ripe barley hue. The boy picked up an old brass candlestick lying on the gravel and held it high, laughing gleefully at the idea of a candlestick in the water.

Suddenly that candlestick appeared to be alight; the air crackled; colossal noise fell grayly; the figures were blurred. Everywhere glassy toadstools grew on the river.

Cries of terror came from the children. They were getting wet in the rain!

Oh, oh, where were their clothes? Far away in the house! Not even a mackintosh between them! Oh, oh! Cries of despair and misery.

'Quick, *quick*, Daddy! Can't you see we are getting wet?'

'But you're wet already!'

'Quick! Oh! Oh! It's raining.'

No argument or exhortation consoled them. What was the difference between one wet and another? Weren't the large raindrops quite warm, much warmer than the river?

No use. It was raining, they had no mackintoshes, they would be soaked. Margy sobbed. John gibbered with rage because I would not share their plaint, but laughed callously.

While John was crying, I threw off coat and trousers, and splashed into the river. It was a strange feeling, swimming with multitudinous pillars of water arising level with one's eyes, millions of ice-flowers growing instantly and blossoming with white water-drops spilling. It was a delightful feeling, sheltering from the rain in the river. Come in, children, it's fine fun!

'Gitoom, you darned old vool, you!' cried John. 'Us be wet through to the skin, *can't you see?*' He and Margy ran home, weeping — because it hadn't happened before.

THE WAGNER ACT: AN EVALUATION

BY ROBERT LITTLER

ONE hundred years ago, mere membership in the shoemakers' union was held indictable as a criminal conspiracy. It took fifty years to establish the right to strike. The Debs case denied it to railroad men in 1894. Less than twenty years ago our federal courts were enjoining boycotts. The right to picket is even now in the making. We lawyers cannot deny that we have been extremely slow to adapt the uses of the law to changing industrial conditions.

It had been increasingly obvious that collective bargaining was what the nation wanted and what it did not have. So Congress undertook to bring it about as quickly as possible and in the easiest manner. The Wagner Act itself was not revolutionary. It was foreshadowed in its entirety through the principles established by the War Labor Board under the co-chairmanship of William Howard Taft and Frank P. Walsh. That such a statute should be adopted was first suggested in the Report of President Wilson's Second Industrial Conference, which was published in 1920. Among the other members who signed it was the vice chairman who presided over most of its deliberations. His name was Herbert Hoover. The whole doctrine was enacted in the Railway Labor Act of 1926. This was passed by a Republican Congress and signed by Calvin Coolidge.

If you will read the Wagner Act in its entirety you will discover that it is quite simple. It establishes but four principles of substantive law. The first is that employees shall have the right to bargain

collectively through agents of their own choosing. This merely declared the law as it was before. The second is that employers may not interfere in the organization of the men. This is an obvious corollary to the first. It added something to the previous law, but it was a change by no means spectacular. The third is that the employer cannot control the organization of the men once it is established. This too is a development of the first. For there is no true bargaining if the employer speaks out of one side of his mouth for himself and out of the other side for the men. The fourth principle is that the employer must bargain collectively if the employees so request. This was new; but if we accept the desirability of collective bargaining there is little in it to which we may object. In four sentences you have the fundamental rules of the Wagner Act.

I

Four years and some months have now elapsed since the Wagner Act was adopted with the confident promise that it would substantially mitigate the public inconvenience brought about through economic action by unions to compel recognition by recalcitrant employers. It is well inside the truth to say that no spectacular diminution of labor disturbances has been noticed. It is not proper to charge all of this to the Act or to the activities of the Labor Board. Considerable unrest is to be expected as a concomitant to the transformation from in-

dividual to collective bargaining. It is an axiom well known to cooks that if you would make an omelet you must first break some eggs. Whether the sum total of the results of the Act is entirely in the public interest is a question which history will answer more accurately than can we. That the people are not satisfied is attested not only by current polls of public opinion but also by the vigorous and sustained criticism of both employers and the American Federation of Labor. Even the CIO joined the hue and cry during its San Francisco convention in October.

While the various critics of the Board launch their offensives from opposite points of view, their attacks have this in common, that they are rather more upon the administration of the Act than upon the terms of the Act itself. That the Board is consciously biased against the employing class is an accusation which the objective evidence does not support. It is not fair to the Board to draw conclusions solely upon the basis of the final orders it has made. Of the charges of unfair labor practice that have been filed, fewer than one in ten ever go to a hearing, let alone to a decision. The overwhelming majority are settled somewhere along the way. It is the policy of the Board that no such charge is even formally heard unless the Board's representatives are convinced that there has been a violation of the Act, unless they are satisfied that the violation can be proved, and unless they find that the dispute cannot be settled. The final decisions themselves merely mark the outward boundaries of what are, in the conception of the Board at least, the most outrageous labor practices by the most intransigent of employers.

Of course it is from the decisions that we must determine the rules of human conduct established under the Act. If you do not take your facts from partisans or scan them from epitomized abstracts in the public press, but if instead you have the patience to read page after

page of the actual opinions, you must believe that what the Board has tried to do is to enforce the law as it is written. As you pore through them you say to yourself, 'This is all very sensible.' But every now and then you come upon one which raises you clear out of your chair in wonder that reasonable men can do such things.

What are the nature and sources of this derangement? I have mentioned the almost universal want of satisfaction with the work of the Board. In sharp contrast is the attitude of the Board itself. No one can do business with the Board and its staff without becoming aware that the whole organization has made a religion of the Act. They confuse their own purposes with those of the Almighty. This is a very dangerous thing. For the Board organization, in an excess of zeal to enforce the Act against all comers, has extended the terms of the statute beyond its true intent, and in the enforcement of it has cut corners which establish disquieting precedents.

The Act says that an employer shall not 'interfere' in the organization of the men. What is interference? The National Electric Products Company told their employees that if they joined the CIO the A. F. of L. would boycott their products and they could not be widely sold. The Pacific Greyhound Company suggested to their bus drivers that joining the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen would be subscribing to an organization whose main interest was with the railroads as opposed to the bus lines. Both observations were true; both were on subjects of mutual interest to the employer and his employees; but both were held by the Board to be 'interference' with the self-organization of the men and in violation of the Act. The attitude of the Board on employer statements has been so severe that even the Civil Liberties Union opposed the decision of the Board in the Ford case.

In its enthusiasm to shelter the unions the Board has gone too far in holding employers to a vicarious responsibility for the acts of inconsequential subordinates exceeding that which any business man could reasonably have anticipated. In a hundred cases employers have been condemned, not because of what corporation officers have done or what executives — major or minor — have said, but by reason of trivial acts by insignificant straw bosses. In the Pacific Gas & Electric Company decision the Board found that certain foremen had declared themselves against the CIO union. They were so inferior in the chain of command that they were included by the Board as laborers in the definition of the appropriate bargaining unit. Some of them had joined the union. It would seem that one who is eligible to vote and join should be at least entitled to speak. But the Board held the company responsible for their expressions. It is true, as the Board says, that some employers may design a devilish plot to have topside management put on a pious and false front of legality while they direct lesser men to do the dirty work; but the Board goes too far.

The most startling aberration indulged by the Board is the practice of drawing sweeping presumptions when it has no direct evidence to support a finding of guilt. The International Shoe Company has a factory at Hannibal, Missouri, and the A. F. of L. was trying to persuade the workers to join. Several older employees sought out the superintendent and asked whether they should affiliate with the national organization or form a union of their own. The superintendent said that under the law he could give them no advice; but when they pressed him for some help he suggested that they might consult certain downtown business men. They did so. Later an independent union was formed. On these proved facts the Board concluded there had been interference with the right of self-organiza-

tion. In its opinion the Board said that it should be presumed that the downtown men would advise a company union because it should be presumed that they would give advice which would be agreeable to the company; and they were presumed to think that the company was opposed to the A. F. of L. — which was not the fact; and the superintendent was presumed to know the erroneous state of mind which existed downtown, as presumed by the Board, and by suggesting that the employees discuss the problem with business men he would be presumed to have intended to tell them, indirectly, that they should not join the A. F. of L. but should form a company union. Such stuff is purely wishful thinking, well bound up in a full dossier of preconceived ideas. It would be well for the Board to take a few feathers from the wings of its imagination and stick them in the tail of its judgment.

II

I have said that the Board is trying to be fair. Yet if this is wrong I know of no way to legislate fairness into a tribunal where it does not otherwise exist. If these serious mistakes arise, as I think they do, from an excess of zeal, still there does not appear to be any ready device of statutory amendment to reverse their tendencies. Probably our best remedy is by vigorous criticism — such as this one — to persuade the Board to get back on the reservation. If we fail, then we must get a new Board. Most of the amendments proposed in Congress are utterly useless to accomplish these purposes.

It has been suggested that the Board be increased from three to five members and that it be made representative of capital, labor, and the general public. And what good would that do? There is no magic in the number five. If three are unfair, would five be more fair? Others suggest that we should segregate into two separate agencies the prosecut-

ing and the judicial functions of the Board. Unless there be a substantial increase in the duties of the Board, it does not appear that such a change would be useful. Of the charges filed with the Board, fewer than one in ten ever go to a hearing. The remedy would affect only ten per cent of the cases. Testimony is always taken by what are called 'trial examiners.' They also recommend findings of fact and forms of orders which the Board almost universally adopts. These trial examiners come from Washington. The attorneys who put in the cases of the Board are always local men. I have participated in cases where the trial examiners and regional attorneys did not even know each other before the hearings. I apprehend that between the trial examiners and the regional attorneys there is less contact than between the average District Judge and the average United States District Attorney under the Department of Justice.

Fortunately and justifiably there is much public confidence in our federal appellate courts. So we have heard it said that we should authorize our Circuit Courts of Appeal to review the facts found by the Board. The Wagner Act now endows the Circuit Courts with power to upset Board findings unless they are adequately supported by 'evidence.' At first the Courts seemed quite reluctant to reverse the Board; of late they have done so more and more. To go further would require the Courts to try the cases all over again. This would be altogether bad. It would be carrying the doctrine of checks and balances to an extreme.

For the government to set a man to do a job, then set a watchman to watch him, and another watchman to watch the watchman, was very popular in the eighteenth century — and so was the flintlock rifle. Today the economic world moves faster. It is better to put all the eggs in one basket, and then watch the basket.

III

Yet, contrary to the ecclesiastical dogma of the Board itself, the Wagner Act has received no divine sanction. Actual operation under it has developed stresses and strains which *can* be remedied by new legislation. To what extent these weaknesses are due to structural defects or to the uses to which it has been put by the Board is of less importance than the fact that there is a remedy at hand. At least three defects are manifest and are important.

Aside from its quasi-criminal jurisdiction to restrain unfair labor practices by employers, the Board is also authorized to investigate and certify which union represents the men. The Act provides, and the Board has held, that the union or its officers are the agents of the employees and that they can change their representation as they wish. The Act also expressly authorizes closed-shop agreements. What is to happen when the employees make a closed-shop agreement through one union, and then a majority shifts to another union? The M & M Woodworking Company makes plywood at a plant near Portland, Oregon. They had a closed-shop agreement with an A. F. of L. union. By this they promised to hire and retain in their employ only members of the A. F. of L. A majority of their employees withdrew and joined a CIO union. The old union demanded that the CIO men be discharged. The company complied. The CIO union thereupon contended that its members had been discharged for union activity and that the management must deal with the new representation. The Board found the employer guilty of a violation of the Act even though the discharges were required by contract. By the theories of the Wagner Act the men could change their affiliation and the employer must recognize the union with the new majority. Yet because of the closed-shop agreement the men

must belong to the old union to be able to work.

Under the statute as it now is the problem will remain insoluble. You can promote flexibility of representation by requiring recognition promptly to follow changes of opinion and affiliation; or you can promote stability by allowing and enforcing closed-shop agreements. You cannot have both. The acme of collective bargaining is an agreement. Once it is arrived at it should be enforced. The problem should promptly be resolved by statutory clarification. If the men make a closed-shop agreement they should not be allowed to break it by joining another union. Perhaps there should be a time limit on the enforceability of these clauses to prevent affiliations becoming frozen by contract. But any rule on the subject is far better than a conflict, and better than none at all.

Competition between unions for representation of workers is a vast source of industrial conflict. The unions have a word for it. They call it a 'jurisdictional dispute.' When it is between the CIO and the A. F. of L. the Board will take the case and certify which represents the men. When it is between two A. F. of L. unions the Board will not. The idea is that, since the Federation itself has the machinery to decide it, the Board will not interfere. So far as I am aware, no such problem has arisen as to the CIO. But the Federation's machinery too often does not work; and the employer and the public suffer from the consequent disturbances. For nearly forty years the Teamsters and Brewery Workers have been fighting, striking, and picketing over which should have jurisdiction over drivers of brewery trucks. These manifestations of union activity are completely without excuse. The Board should be directed by law to certify who represents the employees in all cases. The employer should not be required to choose at his peril.

While the Wagner Act denounces un-

fair labor practices by employers, nothing is said about the unions. Altogether too frequently the Board has taken the position that no wrongs which the union may commit will disentitle it to the protection of the law. Unfortunately there is a substantial minority of union leaders who regard the use of the 'goon squad' as legitimate strategy. These 'goons' are the strong-arm men who persuade workers to support the union by means of the argument of the blackjack and a piece of lead pipe. So, many have suggested that the Labor Board be given power to restrain coercion, violence, and intimidation on the union side. But, if you stop to think of it, this additional work would involve the Board in so much constabulary duty that unless its staff were multiplied tenfold in order to police every important picket line in the nation the whole machinery would bog down through sheer bewildering unworkability.

There is a modification of this idea which has possibilities. We might adopt an amendment providing that any union guilty of violence or intimidation would be ineligible for certification, and no employer should be found guilty of a violation of the Act in refusing to bargain collectively with a union which makes a habit of these practices. Under the Wagner Act the strong arm of the government has been extended to assist employees in organizing and in bargaining collectively. There is no inconsistency, even with the present theory of the Act, in extending that assistance with some discrimination and in saying that we will not give governmental aid to unions which adopt the 'goon squad' policy to promote their interests. It should be no disfavor to the unions to provide that we will encourage those unions which do obey the law, but will not assist those which do not. To this distinction no labor leader whose intentions are honest could have any reasonable objection.

An amendment still more mild in its

effect would provide that the Board may protect the unions which it certifies from interference from any source. It is now the law that, when a union is certified as the collective-bargaining agent, if the employer refuses to recognize the certificate he is guilty of a violation of the law, but if a rival union interferes by establishing a picket line that is all right. It is no help to labor for the Board to certify a union and then allow the processes of collective bargaining to be interrupted through the avarice of a rival and disgruntled organization.

In any amendment on this subject the description of the offensive acts must be written with great care. The commonest suggestion is that we should denounce 'coercion.' What is 'coercion'? To hit a man over the head with a piece of lead pipe is undoubtedly coercion. So is threatening to hit him. Mass picketing is generally held to be coercive; but what is mass picketing — two at an entrance, or three, or five, or ten, or twenty? Is it coercion for the pickets to sing hymns? One court in Pennsylvania found it so. Some skeptical soul inquired what hymns were sung and learned that as the non-striking workers entered the plant the pickets made it a practice to sing 'Nearer, My God, to Thee.' The five-finger salute is improper in California. A Connecticut court has said that it was coercive to give 'threatening looks.' In New York it is proper to call a non-striker a 'scab,' but not a 'dirty rat.' That is not all. The law is that a picket line may be coercive if it is non-peaceful, and also it may be coercive if it is for an unlawful purpose. Yet there is no agreement as to what is a lawful purpose. A picket line to organize a plant is coercive in New Jersey; it is not in New York; and in California I am not sure whether it is or not. To picket for a closed-shop agreement is unlawful in Maine and Massachusetts; it is not coercive in New York unless the closed shop would be unduly monopolistic — whatever that means; and in California no one can

know what the rule is until the State Supreme Court passes upon three cases now pending.

So you see the word 'coercion' means nothing because it means too much. Its use is not intellectual economy; it raises more questions than it answers. You cannot say with precision to what acts in human experience it relates. It is a linguistic blank. All of this is but one illustration of the point that any amendment which deals with union 'goon squad' strategy must be skillfully drafted. The difficulty is not insuperable. I should hate to admit that the English language does not contain words to express a concept which is so generally understood.

IV

Other proposals have been made to amend the Act to set up a substantive control over union affairs. These include compulsory incorporation of unions, restraint of the use of union funds in public elections, publicity of financial reports, and specific requirements for the conduct of union elections and the taking of strike votes. It is inescapable that over the next fifteen years the unions will undergo a process of public regulation similar to that through which corporations were progressively subjected at about the turn of the century. This will call upon all of us to examine carefully into fundamental considerations of labor organization and the device of collective bargaining. These questions are too important to be disposed of by any ancillary amendments to the Wagner Act. It is high time to give thought to some of the ultimate problems of this relatively new relationship.

What should be the true nature of a union? Should it be regarded as a unit or merely as an aggregation of individuals? Most labor unions are unincorporated associations. The law now says that they are not units. They are aggregations of individuals. When they act, they act not as an entity but as a

group of persons. When a union holds title to real property the equitable ownership of the property is in the entire membership as co-owners. Most courts have said that in a collective-bargaining agreement the real parties in interest are the men themselves — not the union.

The Wagner Act clearly adopts this theory. In some states the agreement is held to be with the employees of the individual plant made through the agency of the whole union or possibly through the agency of the officers of the union. Other states say the agreement is with the whole body of union members and through either of the alternative agencies. The difference is real. If the agreement is with the whole body of the union, then the union determines whether the contract is renewed or whether there is a strike; if it is with the particular employees of the plant, then they alone decide. Then, too, what should be the relation of a local union to its international, and the international to the broader Federation or Congress?

Incorporation is no solution. The purpose of most of those who propose that unions incorporate is to increase liability and responsibility for wrongful acts. The result would be the opposite. If you recall, the main reason why entrepreneurs incorporate their businesses is to limit liability. The corporate device was designed to facilitate the organization of capital and the management of its affairs. It is not adapted to union organization. There should be established by law a new definition of organization conformed particularly to the necessities of labor unions.

Then again, what should be the proper nature and effect of collective-bargaining agreements? When they are broken by a few members of the union, should the whole organization be liable or only the few? What machinery can we set up which will promptly and effectually enforce these contracts? Perhaps the greatest single source of industrial un-

rest today is that there is no tribunal to which either party can resort for adequate enforcement. Relief must be prompt. As Napoleon said to his generals before Austerlitz, 'Ask me for anything but time.' The only remedy available in the courts which is of any use at all is the injunction in equity. This is too complicated, too slow, too costly. Do we need a whole new set of labor courts? It would seem so.

Most important of all, what are the appropriate objects of union strategy and what the allowable tactics on a picket line? On both these subjects the courts are in hopeless confusion. These are questions of public policy. It is unfair to call upon a judge to decide whether a union should be entitled to picket for a closed shop. That is not a matter of law. There is no law, except by analogy. It is a question of what the people want.

But to add all of this legislation to the Wagner Act would be to engraft a pine tree on a rosebush. The Wagner Act is limited to a single, specific subject — the right of employees to organize and bargain collectively. These other reforms embrace the whole area of industrial relations. They merit independent consideration. I doubt, too, whether on these broader subjects our national thinking has sufficiently matured to justify attempting to crystallize it in a Congressional enactment. It was Lord Bryce who pointed out that one of the great merits of our federal form of government was that we can test proposed reforms in individual states without the hazard of a national commitment. Experience with the Wagner Act abundantly proves the wisdom of this caution.

V

Thus far the public debate on the Wagner Act has done little but lay over the whole subject a fog of fury and malice and mistrust. The path of truth is neither straight nor clear. Sometimes

it wanders into the field of what is, and sometimes into the realm of what should be. But in the present state of the nation after four years of the Act I see no special cause for alarm. The Wagner Act brought no substantial change in substantive rights. Its principal innovation was to create the sanction of a strong administrative remedy. This was a new and ambitious experiment in government.

The work of the Labor Board has been carried on in the face of bitter and unrelenting opposition. Its problems have been without precedent and most of its decisions are filled with unparalleled embarrassment. As an arbitrator of labor disputes, I have met with similar questions, and I speak with some feeling on the subject. If you have never been confronted with the issue of whether Bill Jones was fired for union activity or for the infraction of some minor rule, you have no possible conception of the mental labor pains which are suffered by the trier of the fact while he gives birth to his decision.

That, under all the circumstances, the Act should have been administered imperfectly, even that it has resulted in some considerable injustice, should be no cause for surprise. These ills cannot all be cured by statutory amendment. Not every disease can be treated by medication. I hope it is not too much to expect that, sooner or later, the Board will correct its own habits. If not, then the remedy is to get another Board.

The Act is not perfect. It has flaws to be repaired, omissions to be supplied. More important still are the necessities of reëxamining the broader rules covering the nature of unions, their objects and strategies, and the new technique of collective bargaining and agreements. Prudence requires that all of this be done without haste and with malice toward none. 'It were good,' wrote Sir Francis Bacon, 'that men in their innovations would follow the example of time itself, which indeed innovateth greatly, but quietly and by degrees scarce to be perceived.'

REMEMBER THE STATES

BY T. JEFFERSON COOLIDGE

'To the United Nation belong our external and mutual relations; to each State severally, the care of our persons, our property, our reputation and religious freedom.' — THOMAS JEFFERSON

I

FROM 1861 to 1865 a great civil war raged in this country — one side determined to set up its own government, the other to preserve intact the Union of States. The Federal Government won the war, and there followed what is known as the Reconstruction era, during which federal power usurped throughout the South the functions of local government. The result is well known — democratic government perished and a desperate era set in, bringing disorder and corruption, want and poverty, to a great section of our country. Today once more there are forces, led by the administration, desiring centralized federal control over local affairs. If these forces triumph, the Union of States will be only a name and there will be one consolidated government before whose power all citizens must bow, and their obeisance will not be to the laws of the Congress but to bureaucratic rulings and the power of the spending purse. Under such centralized power, government by the people will perish, and with it democratic government. Furthermore, through waste and restrictions, unemployment may well become chronic, and the standard of living of the people be immeasurably lowered. It is even possible that the unfortunate day may come when the people will pray for a good dictator to relieve them of their troubles.

How is government by the people being destroyed? Formerly the people of a city elected their government officials, responsible to them, and these representatives had to decide whether a new schoolhouse, hospital, or other building was needed by the city. Once the decision was made, the representatives levied taxes on those they were chosen to govern, who would have use of the facilities offered. They were responsible to the interested people, and the voters would decide whether or not their money had been well spent, while they who had the use of the property paid for it. That was government by the people through their elected representatives.

Today the money comes from Washington, collected from all the citizens of the country, while a federal bureaucracy decides whether or not the city shall have new facilities. The citizens want the money spent in their city; it is not their money, and yet they alone will enjoy the benefits. The main responsibility of their elected officials is to get the money from federal bureaucrats. This is not government by the people through their chosen representatives. It is rule over the city by Mr. Ickes, Mr. Hopkins, or successors, through the power to give or not to give, and yet these gentlemen have no responsibility to the interested citizens.

Our local representatives must beg for money and favors from presidential appointees. No longer are they independent men, no longer is any state self-supporting. Think of our sovereign states depending not on their own citizens but on favors from the Washington political administration to carry out their duties. Consider the consequences as time rolls on. A great bureaucracy backed by the power of four billions of dollars annually holds the threat of life or death over our forty-eight states and countless local governments. Yet every penny of the billions comes or will come from these forty-eight states. With their own money their local rule is being destroyed. Not they but an appointee of the President decides their problems. A distant government should not take our money to spend for local purposes in distant parts. Yet the people of any state are paying out their money for local purposes scattered the length of the country from which they get no possible benefit. Never by any stretch of the imagination is this government by the people of their own affairs.

The administration has four billion dollars annually to spend and the administration is political. What is the position of those who come for money? The power of the purse is a great power, whether used wisely or unwisely, and the people's representatives are at the mercy of this power. Many boast of their ability to obtain funds from the administration as a reason for election. But these funds come from voters of other districts who do not elect them. The hope of money from other parts of the country contributes to their election. That is not conducive to electing independent representatives best able to handle local problems. It is conducive to destruction of responsible government and to lower standards of political morality.

Another danger arises from the willingness of the Federal Government to take the people's money and give it to sections

of the country or groups of the people. Not only our state and local governments but our citizens are becoming dependent on federal largess. Great minority groups have been formed with specious pleas for this money or other forms of special favors, and one or another of these groups frequently holds the balance of power in elections. A representative is judged by them — not by what he has done for all, but by whether or not he meets their particular demands. Our government is racked to-day by special groups demanding favors that cannot and should not be granted, and yet woe to the representative who stands against them. Old people, young people, mayors of cities, farmers, unemployed, labor unions, veterans, businesses — all want something, and that something is at the expense of the whole. It must be recognized that federal expenditures merely take funds that would otherwise be available for state and local expenditure, and consequently local government withers. The government cannot support the people, because the people are the only support of the government. This great democracy cannot endure if federal political power is used to grant these vast sums to special groups.

The financial results of this policy are appalling. Already, in seven years of peace, twenty-three billion dollars in excess of receipts have been poured out and the end is not in sight. The cry goes up for more and more. This is the path to national bankruptcy and disaster. Our Federal Government must adopt a sound economy.

Nor is this all. Our citizens are forbidden to work except on conditions laid down in Washington. Our farmers are prevented by bureaucrats in Washington from exercising their best judgment as to what to plant. Regimentation upon the people grows, and restrictions of individual activity multiply. Washington discretion controls in detail working conditions from Puerto Rico to Alaska. Con-

trol is exercised by men who have never seen the state upon which they place their restrictions — politicians or bureaucrats tell the farmers what to plant and how much. The great fear of the founders of our Republic — a centralized discretionary government — is rapidly becoming an actuality.

The belief that our state and local officials are not competent to handle our individual affairs is a belief that democracy and free enterprise will fail, and is not worthy of a great and free people who believe in self-government. We must recognize that our country is too large, the interests and conditions too diversified, for the people to govern themselves from Washington in domestic affairs. Either the people must govern locally or they must be ruled from Washington. Home rule has been the credo of the great liberals, yet the federal administration acts as though the people and their sovereign states were incompetent and unable to decide their most minor problems, let alone govern themselves.

Surely this administration has not conducted itself in accord with the spirit of the tenth amendment of the Constitution, 'The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.' Instead it has forged 'new instruments of public power' capable of great destruction, in violation thereof.

Why have we this demand for federal interference in our daily duties and lives? The demand is based on false premises and misleading arguments.

The argument is that the Federal Government has more money than the forty-eight states, whereas every penny must come from the citizens of the forty-eight states.

The argument is that the old and young can be supported in idleness while all others work less, and all be more prosperous — whereas, other things being

equal, work is proportional to production and production to prosperity.

The argument is that production should be restricted to give plenty — whereas restriction of production means less for all and causes idleness and want.

The argument is that wages can be raised by federal law and more work made available — whereas a forced raising of wages will in all probability create unemployment and want.

The argument is that the government can increase employment by spending the proceeds of taxation — whereas employment, particularly useful employment, is reduced by the process.

The argument is that monetary juggling and extravagant spending will create prosperity — whereas sound money and government economy are fundamentals of prosperity.

There almost seems to be a belief that the Federal Government has magic powers of witchcraft by which material wealth can be produced from nothing.

Such theories applied nationally will immeasurably lower the standard of living. If applied by and within a state, mistakes will be rapidly exposed by the better living conditions in neighboring states.

II

Now for one hundred and fifty years we have been a united nation composed of self-governing units with a free economy little hampered by government restrictions. Under this system we became the envy of the world — by far the most prosperous nation ever known, with the highest general standard of living. Our land was the land of opportunity for all. Of course there were abuses and inequalities to be remedied, but these are capable of being handled within the fundamental principles of our society. A drastic change in these principles will create abuses and conditions far worse than those that exist.

The principles of our form of government were simple. The states were sov-

ereign with respect to the activities of their own citizens — the Federal Government responsible for foreign affairs and the flow of commerce between the states and with foreign countries. Then the Federal Government was given additional power in fields where uniformity was of prime importance — power to establish a uniform monetary standard and uniform bankruptcy and patent laws. In other words, the states were to be sovereign in all those affairs in which they had power to exercise their sovereignty, with the exceptions named, while to the Federal Government were delegated those national powers that simply could not be exercised by the states. While the states were sovereign in respect to their citizens, yet local governments elected by the people and responsible to the citizens of the locality were formed for local affairs. Under a government of law applying to all alike, the people were free to use their talents and judgment to produce abundance for themselves and others. Thus was established government by the people, and unless we retrace our steps to these principles government by our people will be merely an interesting experiment of the past.

Admittedly science and invention have greatly changed our society and have imposed greater and greater responsibility on the Federal Government. What should be today these responsibilities and duties based on our system of dual government?

Of necessity the federal duties will include, as always, peace and war and foreign relations, with the maintenance of the army and navy, and, as in the past, these will be the cause of most of the federal expense. The postal service is of course a federal function. Under the monetary power will come regulations of our great system of deposit banking, while the savings institutions will remain state affairs. Under the commerce clause will come the regulation of our railroad system, our ships and aero-

planes. The flood control and navigation of interstate rivers would be properly a matter of federal concern, but any power by-product should be sold without favor or discrimination at the dam site. Radio broadcasting would obviously be under federal regulation. Then there are functions that cover the nation, and from which harmful results might arise that the states cannot prevent. These might include aid in protection from certain diseases and pests, some regulation of sale of securities, and some regulation of certain nation-wide trade practices. Possibly there might be federal concern in certain activities of long-distance telegraph, telephone, or transmission of power. Again, if the necessity arises, the Federal Government must see that no private power is concentrated over the nation with which the states cannot properly cope, whether this concentration of power be by organized labor, monopolistic capital, or other group.

The welfare of the average man will remain, as in the past, a state or local duty under the guidance of officials chosen by and responsible to the local voters.

The education of the young, the care of the young and old, the sick and unemployed, the question of hours and wages of work, the conservation of soil of the farms, the housing of the citizens, the regulation of local utilities, and all the individual problems of the citizen must be handled by the individual states or the people thereof under the rule of elected officials responsible to them. No doubt public money will be spent in varying ways as the local needs vary. That is for the representatives of the people of the states and local governments to decide. Our citizens know best the needs of their neighborhood and will spend their own funds more wisely. Financially this can be no hardship. If certain taxes can be better obtained by central administration, then let the Treasury collect these taxes and distribute pro rata, according to population, to the states, but

let not presidential appointees, nor even the Congress, determine for what purposes this money shall be spent. Take from Washington the spending powers, with their unfortunate results in politics, government, and economy.

III

Under these principles of our constitutional history the opportunities for self-government and prosperity are unlimited. The people of an individual state are protected from dangers of war by the Federal Government. Federal taxes are light, leaving ample sources for local and state governments. The people have the blessings of the most modern machinery and ample capital; they are highly skilled, with intelligent leaders; and they have the greatest consuming market the world has ever seen in which to sell their products at their full value. Likewise they can buy without tariffs or restrictions from the greatest producing country the world has ever seen. They can engage in foreign trade, with the Federal Government exerting its best efforts to promote exchange of goods in foreign

commerce. To complete the picture, they are assured of a stable currency, and efficient and economical transportation regulated by their own Federal Government. What more can a great people, who believe in self-government and desire prosperity, ask for?

Is not this a happier picture than a country ruled by the whim of bureaucrats, taxed to the limit of federal taxing power, where individuals are restricted in countless ways, and work and production lessened by government decrees, while the right of self-government is merely a theory?

Powers of government should be distributed over the land, and never should the greater government supplant the lesser in those duties capable of performance by the lesser unit. Responsible state and local government is the foundation stone of our democracy. We see today consolidated federal power destroying this foundation, while, under the spell of unsound reasoning, the people are surrendering their rights and liberties. Only by a return to the principle of state sovereignty over its citizens can our democracy endure.

SONG

BY ROBERT HILLYER

SINCE only Man may choose
His love by beauty's choice,
Wherein perfections fuse:
The hands, the face, the voice;
So to each man be given
The wisdom born of heaven
To choose aright.
Then though the world go ill,
His heart and spirit still
Shall have their light.

His private world defies
Destruction from without;
Truth, in the face of lies,
Faith, in the gale of doubt.
To him the flow of time
Shall like a gliding rhyme
Give life its form.
Him shall no sunlight cheat
To pride, nor to defeat
The winter storm.

So, as was Man designed
To live, this man shall live,
With spirit, heart, and mind
No longer fugitive.
For he who chose aright
Shall love in long delight
Through beauty's choice.
Safe in the ample thought
Of beauty's God who wrought
Her face, her voice.

THE EARTH

BY H. E. BATES

I

ALL that the Johnsons had was the earth. Very often it seemed as if it were all they had ever had.

It was true that they also had possessions, — a plough, a two-wheeled cart, tools, a bony brown mare which slowly dragged the plough and the cart about their rough four-acre plot, — but without the earth these things were useless. It was true that they also had a son.

The Johnsons' son was named Benjy, and it was more than thirty years since they had surrendered to the idea that he was not right in his head. It was not that he was insane or imbecile or even that he could not read and write and count figures, but only that he was simple, not quite like other men. And because he was their only son the Johnsons had spent many years being a little too kind, too anxious, and too sacrificial towards him, so that he had grown up to seem worse, in their eyes, than he really was.

Benjy had the large loose limbs that often belong to the simple-minded, and thick soft fair hair on his face. He had the look of being a simple-hearted man as well as a simple-minded man. His eyes were blue, and all day long he had a simple smile on his face. But somewhere behind the blue eyes, the simple smile, and the soft childish hair, simplicity seemed gradually to have become a kind of cunning.

It was more than thirty years since the Johnsons, realizing that he was not quite

like others, had taken Benjy to a doctor. This doctor had persuaded them that he needed interests that would strengthen his mind. It would be good if they gave him something to do, some occupation, which would help his development. It would help a great deal if they gave him a special interest, to feed his sense of responsibility. 'You are people on the land,' the doctor said; 'let him keep hens.'

So for many years Benjy had kept hens, and what the earth was to his mother and father the hens were to Benjy: they were almost all he had. When he came from school, cut off by his simplicity from other children, Benjy went straight home to his hens, which he kept in a wire coop that his father had made at the back of the house. At first he kept ten or a dozen hens, all colors and breeds, brown and speckled and black and white, and the coop was small. He fed the hens simply, on scraps from the table, seeded cabbages strung from the wire, a little maize, or corn ears which he gleaned in the late summer from his father's acre of stubble. It is possible that a hen, being a simple creature, thrives best on simple treatment. Benjy understood the first and last thing about a hen: that it exists for the purpose of laying eggs. In those days this simple process had not become scientific; nor had it become highly complicated and commercialized. Eggs were cheap; hens mysteriously pecked nourishment off the bare earth. They sat in a

homemade nesting box, on straw, and laid the eggs expected of them.

Benjy understood another thing about the business of hens, and that was that eggs could be sold for money. At the very beginning Benjy's eggs were sold to callers at the back door of the house, in scores and half scores and fives, and the money from these eggs was put carefully, almost religiously, into a large white basin that stood on the top shelf of the kitchen cupboard. The basin was beyond Benjy's reach. 'But one day,' his mother would tell him, 'the money will be yours. You understand? Your father and me are going to save the money. When there's enough we shall put it in the bank. The bank will give interest on it, and then one day, when you're twenty-one, it will be yours by rights. It'll be all yours and you can do what you like with it. Do you understand?' And Benjy would smile simply at his mother and say yes, he understood.

As time went on, Benjy began to keep many more hens. Soon there were more eggs than could be sold at the back door, and by the time Benjy left school at fourteen he had forty or fifty hens and about as many laying pullets, and these were producing an average of three hundred eggs a week. Soon he would set off three times a week with a large basket of eggs on a wheel-truck, and hawk them in Castor, the nearest town. By this time the money no longer went into the basin, but straight into the bank. Benjy could read, and a year or two afterwards he read in a paper that it was better to segregate breeds of hens, keeping White Leghorns separate from Rhode Islands, and young from old. This meant new coops, and at the same time Benjy read that hens needed air and exercise and dry hygienic places to sleep. Benjy was very strong and understood a simple thing like nailing wire netting to wood, and began himself to build new houses and coops for the new, segregated breeds of hens. For all this he needed space,

and so his father and mother gave him a strip of land running from the back of the house halfway across the field. In this way they gave him something more precious than they had ever given before. For the first time, without fully realizing it, they gave him a piece of the earth.

All this time they themselves had struggled hard and almost vainly with the earth. At the back of their minds lay a precious belief that Benjy would one day grow out of his simplicity. In the same way they cherished a silent belief that the earth would one day outgrow its poverty. The earth had yielded stubbornly for them, and the reason, like Benjy, was simple. The reason was not in the earth, but in themselves. For most of their lives they had put rather more value on faith than on sweat.

For many years Benjy's father had been a local preacher, a man with quite a gift of talking. He liked not only to talk on Sundays, to village congregations in small still chapels far out in the countryside, but also to talk at the back door, over the field gate, on the road outside the house. He talked so much that he must have had an idea that the earth, designed, created, and nourished by God, would take care of itself. While he talked, thistles seeded and choked his wheat, rabbits broke in and gnawed his cabbages, storms smashed his standing corn. He struggled on like a man chained by bad luck, and while he knew that his land was poor, and that Benjy was a simple man, no one had ever had the need or courage to tell him that he himself was a lazy man with too large a trust in Providence.

And while his father talked Benjy went on steadfastly with the simple business of making hens lay eggs. Part of the field at the back of his father's house began to resemble a quivering checker-board of black and brown and white feathers. For a long time now the eggs had been too many for the wheel-truck, and Benjy at regular intervals borrowed

his father's horse and cart, taking the eggs not only down into the town but into market. All the time Benjy wore the simple smile of a simple-hearted man on his face, and all the time the money went religiously into the bank in his name.

II

When Benjy was twenty-one his mother and father planned and carried out a little ceremony. They got his passbook from the bank, and at supper his father made a sort of speech, almost in the tone of a public address, in which he talked as if he had been a diligent man all his life, setting an example of thrift and industry, and as if this, the passbook, were Benjy's natural reward for following it. He talked as though he were talking to a child who still does not know one from two, and at last he gave Benjy the passbook.

'This is your money, Benjy,' he said. 'Now you're twenty-one, this is your money. Do you understand?'

'Yes,' Benjy said, and he took the passbook. He opened it and looked at it, and saw in it an amount of more than two hundred and thirty pounds. Then he shut up the passbook and put it into his pocket.

Benjy's mother and father did not speak. A strange tremor of a peculiar emotion went through them both: a mixture of disappointment, fear, pride, and pain. The amount in Benjy's passbook was more than they themselves had ever amassed from the earth in their lives. They did not hope and did not mean that Benjy should give it back to them, but there was something about the silent, simple finality of his putting the passbook into his pocket that struck them like a blow in the face. They had expected something else: a word of thanks, perhaps a concession, a willingness that they should share the money they had helped to save. It hurt them momentarily that Benjy should appear so completely indifferent to them and to

all they felt. Then they remembered why it was. Though a man, Benjy was still simple. There were shades of feeling and conduct that were beyond his understanding. They were touched with pity for him, and understood.

'What are you going to do with the money?' they said.

'I'm going to buy a piece of land,' Benjy said.

'Land?' they said. 'What land? Where?'

'Mr. Whitmore wants to sell the four acres next to us,' Benjy said.

'But Benjy,' they said, 'how did you know? How did you find out?'

Benjy had a very simple answer.

'I asked Mr. Whitmore,' he said.

'Well,' they said, 'that is a very good idea. A wonderful good idea. You couldn't do anything better.'

As time went on, and Benjy acquired the land, his father and mother not only felt that it was a good idea, but felt very proud of him. They had the kind of pride in him that parents have in a child that says its first word or takes its first step. Benjy, a simple-minded man, had taken his first step in normal, adult things. It was wonderful too that he had taken this step without help, without force or prompting. All his life they had treated him as a child that will not grow up, and now, suddenly, he had grown up. Though they could scarcely realize it, Benjy was a man of property.

For the next four or five years Benjy went on creating more houses for more hens, and then selling more eggs and making more money. He was still a simple man. He could not have made a pair of boots; he knew nothing about the stock markets. But he knew everything about a hen. His hens were still to him what the earth was to his parents: all he had, and all he understood.

There was only one difference between Benjy's hens and his parents' land. The hens belonged to Benjy. The land had never belonged to his parents, who had rented it now for forty years, on a yearly

tenancy, from a man named Sanders. They had often spoken of buying the land, but somehow the scheme never came to anything. It was easier for Benjy's father to stand at the door and talk, or to talk in the pulpit and trust in God, than to make a business proposition. And now, at sixty-five, he was too old to think of buying land, even if there had been any money for buying land.

And suddenly the land was for sale: their land, their earth, which was all they had. The town was spreading, the man named Sanders said, and everywhere people wanted land for building. Either he must sell the land for building, or he must sell the land to them.

They felt lost and distracted. They had lived a vague, trusting life without system, with a simple-minded son to rear, with an infinite faith in God but with little or no faith in fertilizers. As a result they had nothing. Even the earth, which they had regarded as inviolate, was not theirs and was about to be taken away from them.

Deeply and painfully upset, they went to the man named Sanders, and told him how it was.

'I don't see no way of gitting the money,' Benjy's father said. 'So we must git out at Michaelmas. That's all.'

'I shouldn't worry,' Sanders said. 'Don't surprise me you can't see your way to do it. But I can tell you this: if you can't buy it, somebody not far away will.'

'Who'll buy it?' they said.

'Benjy,' he said.

They went home feeling that this was the supremely important moment in their lives. It seemed like the moment of reward. If their faith had been shaken, it was now completely whole again. They saw that there could be joy and satisfaction and ultimate good even in the raising of a simple-minded son.

'We never knew, Benjy. We never even suspected,' they said. 'What made

you do it? What are you going to do?'

'I'm going to put up more incubator houses,' Benjy said.

Again, as when they had given Benjy the passbook, they did not speak. They had expected something else, without quite knowing what: a word, a small concession perhaps, an assurance that things would go on as before. But there was nothing, only the same simple finality as when Benjy had taken possession of the passbook. They were momentarily pained. Then they knew, again, why it was. There are some things which are forgivable to a simple-minded man. The simple-minded, as they knew quite well, do not always understand.

III

By this time Benjy was almost forty, and it was only to them that he remained a simple-minded man. As his new hygienic chicken houses began to cover first one strip of his father's former land and then another, with the gray patches of hen dung eating their way into the brown tilled earth, he began to be the largest poultry farmer on that side of the town. In appearance he had changed, too. Always big-limbed, he had now become rather fat. His eyes were still a simple blue, and soft fair hair still grew thickly on his face, but now, set in fat flesh, the eyes seemed much smaller. They were no longer the eyes of a simple-minded man. They were the eyes of a man who, in a simple way, is quite cunning.

No one but Benjy, at this time, knew how many hens and chickens he possessed. No one knew how many eggs the collective-system lorries fetched from him every week; no one knew the amount in his passbook. It was possible to gauge his progress only by the new chicken houses covering his father's former land, and by the fact that he now employed people to help him.

One of these people was a girl named

Florence. She had thick heavy legs and loose lips and unreflective gray eyes that matched Benjy's in their apparent simplicity. When Florence bent down to clean the chicken houses, which were raised up off the ground, Benjy could see a gap of bare flesh above her gray lisle stockings or the shadows of deep breasts beneath her smock. In a little while Benjy was catching Florence about the waist in the warm dark incubator houses, and for the first time in his life he had some other interest besides hens.

It became clear to him that his father and mother did not like Florence, this simple, undistinguished girl with ugly legs and a mouth that would not keep shut. But he did not need a distinguished, intelligent girl, even if one would have looked at him. He needed a woman to help with the hens, and soon he was announcing that he and Florence would be married.

As with the passbook and the land, his father and mother were not prepared for that.

'Married? Aren't you all right as you are? Don't you want time to consider it? Where are you going to live?'

'Here,' Benjy said.

And that autumn, at the end of his fortieth year, Benjy moved into the house with Florence as his wife.

'We'll want the front bedroom,' Benjy said.

All their lives his father and mother had slept in the front bedroom. Now they vacated it and moved into the back. This removal hurt them deeply. But because it was now Benjy's house, and because Benjy asked it, they moved without protest, adding a little more to the long chronicle of sacrifice, forgiving Benjy because the simple-minded cannot be expected to understand.

But the problem of the girl was different. It seemed to them that the girl was about to take Benjy away from them. The air in the house became charged deeply with antagonism, the

house itself invisibly but clearly divided. And then presently it became divided in actuality. Up to that time the four people had eaten together. Suddenly Benjy's mother did not like the way Florence scoured the saucepans. 'I always scour 'em with soda. Soda's always been good enough for me and always will.'

When Benjy heard of the quarrel he had a very simple solution. 'That settles it,' he said. 'Now you eat in the kitchen, and we'll eat in the other room.'

And throughout that winter Benjy and his wife lived in one part of the house, and his father and mother in the other. To the old people the days began now to seem very long, and as they looked out on the land they could see the reason. Where there had once been brown bare earth, rows of winter beans, patches of wheat, there were now only Benjy's chicken houses. The earth was still there, but the purpose of it no longer concerned them. The plough, the mare, the cart, and their few tools stood about in the yard, but now it was truer than ever that without the earth they were useless.

As the winter went on, and the four people were confined indoors, the division in the house became an enormous gap. The two women passed each other on the stairs with glances of antagonism, not speaking. When Benjy's father walked out to preach on Sundays he walked with the steps of an old man. Only Benjy, preoccupied with his hens, appeared not to be upset. It was as if the emotions of normal people never penetrated beyond his plump hairy face and the eyes that looked so harmless and simple still.

But in the end it was Benjy who made the decision.

'Mum and Dad,' he said, 'it would be a lot better if you went somewheres else to live.'

'Benjy,' they said.

A lot better,' he said. 'This is our

house now. We want it. I bought the house and I want it now.'

'Benjy.'

'I bought it and I want it,' Benjy said again. 'I want you to go.'

'Benjy, we can't go,' his mother said. 'We got nowhere to go. We got nowhere.'

'You got to get out!' Benjy shouted.

As he shouted they realized, more fully than at any other time in their lives, that Benjy was really not right in his head. His simple blue eyes were shot suddenly with a wild expression of insane anger. They knew suddenly that Benjy was a simple-minded man who was not fully responsible for his actions. And for the first time, struck by this wild-eyed burst of anger, they were frightened of Benjy, too.

'All right,' they said, 'we'll find some way to go.'

IV

It was a week later when Benjy drove his mother and father down into the town. He now had a small Ford van, and as he drove the van, with his mother and father on the driving seat, he showed no sign of normal emotion. It was clear that he did not understand the meaning of affection, or of bewilderment, or de-

spair. He felt and spoke and thought only in the simplest terms, with the cruel simplicity of a child.

'You'll be better by yourselves in lodgings,' he said. 'You'll be better by yourselves.'

They did not answer. They sat with faces made completely immobile by a kind of stupefied resignation very near to grief. They listened silently and, because for forty years they had believed Benjy to be not right in his head, they made allowances for the last time.

Down in the town the car stopped in a street filled entirely with houses. Benjy did not get out of the van. His father's and mother's belongings had already gone on, and now they alighted empty-handed. As they stood on the pavement Benjy spoke a few words to them, looked at them with unmoved simple eyes, and then drove away.

When the van had gone they stood alone on the pavement, looking at the ground. They stood as if they had alighted in a strange place, were not sure of themselves, and did not know what to do.

Once they had had the earth. Now it was not possible to tell, from their downcast and silent faces, whether they altogether realized that it, too, had gone.

ITALY FOR THE ITALIANS

BY WALTER DURANTY

IN the early summer I was asked by the *Atlantic* to visit some countries in Europe which lay under the shadow of war — the Baltic States, Poland, Rumania, Hungary, and, later, Italy and Turkey. My task was not to seek out the political sentiments of statesmen or their 'attitude' towards the impending conflict, but to learn what the peoples of these countries thought about the future and its dangers — in short, how the prospect of war affected their words and doings in the present and their hopes and fears for the future.

For me it was a novel and interesting assignment. It was true that in Russia — and in France during the last war — many years of residence had made me familiar with the thoughts and feelings of the masses as well as of their leaders, but my work had always been concerned primarily with the major lines of politics and economics. Now it seemed I was to put that in the background and turn my attention to the changes which coming events might bring to humble lives. I thought I could learn much from this new departure and welcomed it accordingly. But even at that time there was one drawback to the program that looked so inviting — the feeling that war might break out before inquiries were completed. I must admit that I did not think it would. I did not believe that Germany wished to fight against France and England, and I was sealed to the conviction that France and England would take up on behalf of Poland the gauge of battle refused for Czechoslo-

vakia. Nevertheless, that uneasy feeling persisted, and the event proved it was more warranted than I had thought.

I was making, you understand, a slow tour through Eastern and South Central Europe. At Budapest, in August, I had already booked passage on the airliner to Milan when the first sound of thunder came from the cloud which I had seen no bigger than a man's hand two months before from Warsaw. So I hurried instead to Paris, and there, a few days later, the storm broke. In consequence I did not reach Italy until the German armies were already marching victoriously across the sun-baked Polish plains. Somewhat surprisingly, as it then appeared, Italy had as yet no part in the struggle, but it was evident that the tone and subject of my story must be changed.

Although Italy held aloof, half of Europe was at war, and it was inevitable that the thought and topic of war must dominate the minds and conversations of all Italians, small and great. In other words, I found that political issues now bulked so large in the foreground that the lesser things of daily life were almost hidden by their shadow. The men and women of Italy's towns and villages were possessed by deeper perplexities than how they should eat and work and enjoy the fruits of their labor and marry and rear their children. Willy-nilly, they were forced to think first and most of the problems of their country: Was the 'axis' with Germany a steel bond of union or a flawed and sordid figment? Why had Italy not fulfilled by action the

terms of the alliance which had been signed so lately with resounding pledges and fanfares? Where now did Italy stand — on whose side — for how long? And a host of other questions, about Hitler's pact with Stalin, and the state of affairs in the Balkans, and Turkey and Tunisia, and the army of France, and England's fleet, and opinion in America.

'Because they were tired of uncertainty?' said the old man incredulously. 'That seems no reason for war!' We were sitting on a bench in the Italian frontier station near the mouth of the Simplon Tunnel. I had come through from Paris on the Rome Express and been gratified to find that it was the one train in France or England which is fully lighted — inside — with sleeping cars and restaurant. Of course the corridors are darkened, but you can have lights in your coupé. It is hard until you have tried it to realize how tiresome is travel alone in a 'black-out' train.

The old man was a retired brickmason who had lived in France and spoke the language well and liked the French people, except, he said, they failed sometimes to appreciate the full merit and value of Italy and the Italians. He had asked me why France went to war, and I'd said I really believed that the French were fed up to the teeth with the last two years of alarms and excursions and crises and mobilizations, and therefore had decided to put an end to it all. 'You see,' I added sententiously, 'the French are a logical race and have a neat and orderly mind. They like to plan things in advance for themselves and their wives and children. And so France went to war because she was tired of uncertainty.'

The old man tugged his beard, which was white but not too clean. 'And we,' he said, 'are we not Latins too? But don't you know, *cher monsieur*, that we for many years have used uncertainty each day to flavor our soup for dinner? *He*' — the way he stressed the word left no doubt of whom he spoke — 'he had

said that Italians must live bravely and be ready at any moment to die for Italy's sake. And so there is hurry and rush, and men are sent here and there and dragged away from their vines to build ships of steel at Spezia or make roads in Libya or fight in Abyssinia. I am old and I don't care, and the young ones don't care either. But the others grow tired of running and want to think more of their homes and less of Italy's glory. This country, I tell you, is tired — no matter what *he* may say.'

Just then my train hooted for leaving, which ended our conversation. That annoyed me very much, because always, especially when one is making a tour of inquiry like mine, the next most important thing to learning what people say is to learn why they say it. I mean that so many people everywhere are prone to speak of their country in terms of themselves, a trap which foreign seekers after truth must rapidly learn to avoid. As if a Republican banker might say, 'No decent American has any sympathy or respect for the present administration or will vote to retain it.' That remark was made to me a few weeks before the last election — and therefore needs no comment.

As the train ran down through the mountains past Locarno ('Briand's folly,' as someone has cruelly called it), through Stresa (another pipe dream of peace), I wondered whether the old brickmason said that the country was tired because he was tired himself, or whether Mussolini was right and Stalin was right and perhaps even Hitler was right: that you can catch and train the young ones and spur them on with words of pride and regiment them all for a single purpose in the name of a sacred cause, — Mohammed, for instance, and the Crusades, — or for liberty, as Napoleon did, and, more lately, for the state and racial-nationalist patriotism.

'What strikes you most about Italy?' asked a young man I met at dinner my

second night in Rome. He was the confidential secretary of one of some thirty industrial leaders whom Mussolini had summoned that week to Rome. He was 'of course' a member of the Fascist Party — I didn't press that point, but noted it with interest. I slid his question off. 'That your towns and trains are lighted — it's dark, you know, all over England and France.'

'Hiding in the dark,' he replied. 'They tell me Berlin is still lighted.' His tone was friendly, not sneering, which is one of the things you have to watch in Italy, where most people I found were less fond of the Germans than I had expected; but one never knew. So I said, 'Oh, well, you see, that's the disadvantage of being decent. I mean that the French and English can't bomb German cities except perhaps as reprisal and even then they won't like it, whereas what the Germans might do does not depend upon pity or the bowels of compunction.'

'And what else do you see about Rome?'

'Surprisingly few automobiles in the streets and no coffee,' I replied.

'Gasoline and coffee, yes, and wheat and coal and iron and rubber and cotton — all that means foreign *valuta*. I should like to ask you something: will England try to blockade us because we did not join Germany in war against the Allies?'

'I hope not,' I said, 'but you know what it is — they are afraid of stuff reaching Germany. Anyway, what do you intend to do?'

He shrugged his shoulders. 'You heard what the Duce said — stand pat and keep our powder dry. But do you know that Italy was not overjoyed at Hitler's deal with Stalin, and that we Italians have a sort of instinctive sympathy with the Poles and Hungarians and were not unduly eager to coöperate in German plans for smashing Poland and swallowing South Central Europe — whether that would involve war with France and England or not. We are not

afraid of anyone, nor afraid of war, but . . .'

'You've been at war a long time,' I suggested. 'Since '35 in Ethiopia, and Spain after that — rather tiring, don't you think?'

He frowned at me with doubtful eyes. 'Do you mean we don't know what to do, or have no strength to do it?'

'You spoke yourself,' I answered, 'about Germany's deal with Russia and what that may mean to your interest in the Balkans. Of course I don't doubt your strength, but a man uses strength for his friends, and are you sure of your friends?'

'Why emphasize the word "friends"? ' said an Italian captain who was dining with us. He had fought in Ethiopia and Spain and was also a member of the Fascist Party.

'I meant are the Germans your friends — or the Russians?' I said.

He laughed, 'You may not believe it, but I was born at Delphi, and still I cannot answer that riddle. My father was Consul in Greece and my mother had got her dates wrong or something, but anyway it's true that I was born at Delphi and still can't answer your riddle.'

I thought their failure to answer might be an answer in itself — that not only they don't know but Italy herself does not know where she stands and which are her friends.

'It has been argued,' said my host, 'that the Pontine Marshes were one of the chief causes of the downfall of imperial Rome. They were a hotbed of malaria which thinned the blood and weakened the energies of the Roman people.' We were lunching in the garden of his villa overlooking what had been those marshes but now is fertile farmland with flourishing towns and villages.

'I think,' he continued, 'this is perhaps the greatest achievement of our régime. It was a task of incredible difficulty, and it may interest you to know that we re-

ceived most valuable advice and information from America — I suppose from what your people had learned at Panama.'

'You have done great things in Libya,' I replied; 'made a garden of the desert. And in Abyssinia, too. A friend of mine who was there recently said the Italian network of roads was one of the greatest engineering feats of modern times.'

'Yes, that's part of our Roman heritage. I know that Americans don't like dictatorships, but this régime has transformed Italy, put new spirit in our hearts and made an old people young. Centralization of power makes possible things like this' — he waved his hand towards the smiling fields below us. 'In a country that's overpopulated, with few natural resources, we are stamping out disease and ignorance and poverty. Give us ten more years and you won't see —'

'Ten years of peace,' I interrupted. 'But Europe's already at war. Is that why Mussolini wants to stay out?'

'You foreigners misjudge the Duce. You pay too much attention to what you call sabre rattling and fail to realize that that is part of his program to rejuvenate Italy. But he is a prudent statesman and knows that neutrality — if Italy can stay neutral — is not so easy for us as for the United States. I think you underestimate the effect upon this country of Germany's deal with Bolshevism and what it may mean to Poland. Don't forget that the Vatican is still a great force, a great force inside Italy as well as outside Italy.'

That conversation left me bewildered, but I thought I was getting somewhere. The job I was trying to do is like, in a minor degree, that of the Intelligence Service of an army in wartime. I mean that it consists in collecting all manner of apparently irrelevant details and putting them together and weighing them and selecting the parts that count; and then, after you've selected them, in deciding what they mean. In short, it's a

question of judgment, but there must be some guesswork as well.

I had not been in Rome for twenty years, and the thing which truly struck me most — omitting the lighted city after darkened Paris and London, and no private automobiles unless they had a foreign license, and not a drop of real coffee in even the best hotels — what honestly struck me most was the change in Italian girls. In looks as well as behavior, it's a wonderful change for the better. They used to look dumpy and dowdy, and were surrounded by chaperons and class prejudice if they belonged to the Social Register, and by shyness and superstition if their blood was less blue. Now, however, girls — at least as far as Rome is concerned — look and act like girls in America. Gay and athletic and free; not bold or bad, but friendly — companions and partners at games with their brothers and brothers' friends. And so much better dressed than before! Italian rayon has done that.

This girl who was talking to me had worked her way by scholarships through high school and, of all unexpected things, through a college of veterinary science — or animal husbandry, as they call it at Ohio State University. She was also a first-class swimmer and might, I was told, have represented her country at tennis if she had given more time to practice. Her ambition, it seemed, was to make, or help in making, a second Texas or Argentina for cattle in the Abyssinian uplands. She talked good English, too, although she had never left Italy.

The first thing she said was, curtly, 'I hear you come from Russia. We don't like Bolsheviks here.'

'Oh, afraid of the Balkans, are you? But I think that's Germany's rabbit — or a Russo-Turkish combination as well as Russo-German,' I answered rather unkindly. Newspaper men learn, God wot, to suffer fools gladly, but this one

wasn't a fool and seemed to need sharper treatment.

'What's more,' I added, 'you mustn't forget that your Duce learned something from Lenin and wasn't unwilling to say so; and finally, last but not least, that Russia is playing her own game in this European imbroglio, not the German game. But never mind about that — I gather your work is with cattle, bloodstock and bettering strains, which must throw you to England's side.'

She did not wait for me to ask why; she was, as I said, a smart girl. She said, 'Oh, yes, the Allied blockade — we couldn't get stock from America, North or South, and the English is still the best.'

'That's just what I meant,' I replied. 'And even those dreadful Russians keep on buying English bloodstock, stallions and bulls and boars and rams and even rabbits. So of course you can't fight against us.'

She looked at me doubtfully, then said, 'But why should Italy fight? We have the wisest leader in the world,' — she spoke with great sincerity and most Italians agree with her, and perhaps at that they are right, — 'so why can't we be friendly with both sides? We don't much like the Germans, but I hope you won't try to suggest that either England or France has treated Italy fairly from the Peace Conference up to now. "Dog in the manger" is, I think, the phrase we apply to them.'

'Meaning *Lebensraum*,' I said.

'Meaning nothing of the kind,' she countered. 'There is room in the world for all of us and enough possibilities of developing food and raw materials to make everyone contented. That's what the Duce knows, and if only you'd understand —'

'Wait a minute,' I checked her. 'Can your Duce stop this war?'

She tightened her eyebrows, frowning. 'I don't know, but I'm sure he would like to.'

She was quite young, that girl, and

although her mind was good and well-trained she had little experience of life. But I thought that what she said was truer and made more sense, and perhaps represented better what Mussolini has in mind, than anything else I heard in Italy. The question the Duce must ask himself, however, and the question everyone asks, is 'How can this thing be stopped — or is it not now too late?'

It was one of the meatless days in Rome, and business was brisk for the vegetable and fruit stores in the market. The *patron* of store number eight had a withered leg, and when he saw that I limped, too, that made a bond of union. So when the rush subsided we sat together and shared a bottle of wine.

'I am fifty-five years old,' he told me, 'but I've never yet heard a shot fired in anger. On account of this, you see,' he patted his withered leg. 'The *signor* will understand because he too . . .'

I understood quite well — there is free-masonry amongst cripples.

'But my son was young and strong,' he said with sudden anger. 'He was, you see, a Reservist and they asked for volunteers — for Libya. He had heard, my son Mario, my only son, that they gave new farms in Libya — all ready, you know, and irrigated, with cottages and tools and seed — everything all ready — that they gave them to volunteers — of course after two years' service. So Mario volunteered.'

He looked at me with eyes that were burning and sad, but his voice was steady.

'Do you know what happened then? They sent him instead to Spain — and somewhere there he was killed. They sent the paper to me: "Your son has died for his country" — in Spain. But my son volunteered for Libya, not for Spain, my only son. Died, I tell you. His name was Mario.'

Such cases were common enough, I gathered. And that, I thought, was the answer to those like my host in his villa

overlooking the Pontine Marshes who spoke of the power of dictatorship and centralization and the duty of individuals to sacrifice themselves for the state. He too was wholly sincere, but the man in the market showed me the dreadful flaw in their totalitarian steel: that they don't play fair with their people, because they don't care to or dare to — I don't know which is the worse. It is one thing to say, 'You are cannon fodder, or small cogs in a big machine, or ants in a pitiless ant heap.' I've seen that in Russia and Germany, and perhaps, from a practical viewpoint, it may bring successful results. But why lie to them? Why say, 'Go to Libya and work and we shall reward you with farms' — then send them to Spain to fight for a cause not theirs, and be killed?

I knew that he was an officer in the foreign service of the Vatican, which, I imagine, most diplomatic officers of any foreign service will agree is one of the best-trained and most efficient foreign services in the world. I did not know his rank or position in the Roman Catholic hierarchy, but he had a wider and tighter grasp of European affairs than any other man of his age — I should say between thirty-five and forty — I have met in the last ten years. He spoke with an assurance which I may envy but can never dare to emulate. Who am I, however, to rival — or question — infallibility, however diluted. He said, 'Hitler's deal with Stalin put a gulf between Germany and Italy which can never be bridged. I do not speak of what Poland meant as a Catholic country, nor of the future possibilities of Bolshevik influence in the Balkans, where Italian interests, as you know, are second only to those of Germany. I mean something deeper than that. Whether you believe it or not, there are such things as spiritual forces, the forces of darkness and light, the forces of heaven and hell. To speak in modern political language, I should say that Hitler has wrecked the ideologi-

cal basis of his own platform for the hope of a material support which is neither certain nor sincere.'

'Meaning that Italy is now pro-Ally?' I asked crudely.

'Not, I think, precisely that, but never again pro-German,' he replied.

'Not even if Germany's winning?' I insisted.

He did not answer immediately, and in those moments of silence I had time to think, perhaps unfairly to Italy, that here was the crucial point — a point, I may add, which has not escaped the attention of the Allied high command. Suppose the Germans won a battle or two battles, — they won more than that in the last war, — would Italy still stay neutral? I said that the Vatican diplomat waited before he answered, but when he did speak he spoke decisively. 'No matter what happens, Italy cannot fight on the German-Russian side. Don't you understand,' he added quickly, 'that even national interests cannot dominate? I mean that this country, my country, will not fight for the unholy alliance between Germany and Russia.'

I was much impressed by this conversation. To begin with, it was the first definite statement of the kind I had heard in Italy, where most people walk warily and watch their steps and words. Nevertheless, I think that what he said is the view of many Italians, many small ones and also some great ones.

Alexander Woolcott once said to me, as if he had discovered a great new truth, 'I always talk to taxi drivers.'

'Who doesn't?' I replied so quickly as to take Mr. Woolcott aback. 'You think it's because they see dozens of people daily and life in its seamier fringes, but I go further than that. I like them because they represent the higher levels of the industrial proletariat, plus an individualism so marked as to be almost anarchistic.'

At least that was true of one taxi driver in Rome. He said, 'Italy go to

war? I had too much war. They said it wasn't war, but colonial expedition, to get new land and resources. But me, I lived in Chicago, and because they called them pineapples didn't mean that they didn't explode. Wars — wars — I tell you, mister, the way to win a war is to stay out of it till the last minute and then come in on the right side. We made that mistake before — as a matter of fact, I came back here myself and fought on the Isonzo. That was a battle, if you like. They talk about Verdun and the Somme, but the Isonzo was a battle. Did it do us any good? Of course not. The mistake Italy made in the last war was coming in too soon. Say we'd waited another two years and —'

I checked his volubility. 'So now you won't come in.'

'I hope not,' he said. 'And why should we? We've done quite a lot already and we aren't just "wops" any more. You wouldn't know what's been done in the last twenty years in this country, but I've seen it — they've done a lot. Why waste all that for a war?'

We had reached our destination, so the driver could turn around and look at me.

'It's no good,' he said. 'Wars don't pay — at least not a war like this. And we Italians ain't dumb — you won't see us again in their war.'

I didn't think he knew much, but I didn't think he was 'dumb.'

They told me stories in Rome about dissension between the blackshirts — that is, Fascists — and the army: that the blackshirts were paid too much and the army too little, and that therefore the

army pay had been raised and the blackshirts' pay had been lowered. Which caused, I was told, some friction, and maybe that was the reason why Italy did not fight.

That Italian internal affairs did seem to require a certain degree of revision would appear to be indicated — you'll forgive me if I speak like the English ministry of information, but that is the effect of war censorship — by the recent shuffle in the Italian cabinet and Fascist Party command. Italian national policy, which had been playing, shall we say, this way, found itself suddenly called upon to readjust itself that way — which was most confusing, not only to a foreign seeker for truth but to the Italians themselves.

I met, for instance, in Rome an officer of high rank who had fought in the last war and in Abyssinia and Spain. He was rather bitter about Spain because he did not understand what Italy had achieved there or what she had gained there except, as he put it, 'some experience which may be valuable and a pain in the back of our head.'

'Do you know,' he said, 'that in the last four years Italy has sent one million men overseas — Libya and Abyssinia and Spain — all together?'

'Well,' I said, 'you got experience, didn't you, about modern war? And you still have Abyssinia and Libya. But then what? Where do you stand? That's what I came here to ask: on which side is Italy anyway — for Germany or the Allies?'

'For neither,' he said simply, 'but for Italy — and in that we trust the Duce.'

UNDER THIRTY

[What are the aims, the experiences, and the perplexities of the rising generation? The ATLANTIC intends to find out. Space has been reserved for the best letters written by men and women under thirty. The letters should, if possible, be compassed within 650 words, and those published will be paid for. Under special circumstances, anonymity will be preserved. — THE EDITOR]

'EVERY LITTLE BIT . . .'

Toronto, Canada

To the Editor of the *Atlantic*: —

One of the big problems which face those of us 'Under Thirty' is getting married and establishing a home on a small salary. This is the problem that Janet and I faced and which we have overcome — entirely on credit and the installment plan.

Part of my job is the perusal of mercantile credit reports and I have found that since 1930 many 'little business men' and some bigger ones have kept going largely on credit. Why could not we operate a matrimonial partnership on the same basis with equal success?

So, with cash assets of \$238.50, we got married. The modest wedding and a more abandoned honeymoon cost \$200. In settling down, and one or two vain attempts to keep up with the Joneses, the \$38.50 vanished.

In a small furnished apartment we managed very well on my limited income until The Operation. One day Janet was seized with an acute attack of appendicitis. Fifteen days later she graduated from hospital without the offending organ, but with bills totaling \$250. (Ironically enough, a friend of ours came out the same day with a new baby which had cost her only \$150; she really got something for her money.)

As we had not been able to save anything, this was our first credit experience.

We conferred with the doctors and hospital authorities, pointed out our position, and assured them that we were anxious to honor our obligations. We suggested that we could set aside so much a month which we could divide pro rata among our creditors. Our suggestion was received with pleasure because they said so many people with even better incomes tried to welsh on their medical bills. It took some effort at times, but we eventually paid every cent we owed.

Unknown to us, our credit rating had thereby been established at the Credit Bureau. Some time later we decided to save rent by furnishing a small apartment of our own. After a short talk with the credit manager of a large furniture store, he checked our paying record with the Bureau, and thereafter we were treated as cordially as a millionaire furnishing a mansion for cash.

As soon as the furniture was paid for, we thought we should like a little bungalow of our own. We had the place picked out, but nothing with which to meet the down payment. However, we finally made a deal with the real-estate agent, agreeing to pay the full purchase price plus the down payment in installments equal to what we had formerly been paying as rent. Ninety-nine more installments and we shall be able to burn the mortgage.

We are proud that the financial operations of our partnership have been so successful. Perhaps this is because we

have treated our credit as a sacred trust. We have known people who have abused the privilege and they have invariably met the bailiff's men under embarrassing circumstances.

Shortly after we got married a broker friend of ours mentioned a new 5 per cent bond issue he recommended for investment purposes, so we devised a scheme whereby we could acquire such gilt-edged assets — on the installment plan. A chat with our banker revealed that he would be prepared to lend us \$300 on three of these bonds, and we managed to chisel him down to an interest rate of 5 per cent. Then we instructed him to buy the bonds and hold them as security, arranging to pay so much a month into our account. Thus the interest yield on the bonds took care of the interest payment on the loan. These securities eventually were paid for and formed the first liquid assets our partnership's balance sheet has ever shown.

We are very glad of this because the doctor has just advised us that the first installment of our family is on the way, and we do so want our baby to be paid for — in cash!

X. Y. Z.

THE INSECURE

Wichita, Kansas

To the Editor of the *Atlantic*: —

Perhaps the most disastrous product of our urban, industrial civilization is the spread of the hand-to-mouth, opportunistic way of life. The day-by-day struggle to survive is fast eliminating the future and the past as motivating elements in our lives.

One sees this in almost every phase of human activity. It is, I suspect, the direct result of the economic exigencies of the lower middle class. A man on a low salary or no salary is unable to build for the future. If his rent is paid, if there are groceries in the frigidaire, if the installment on his car has been met, then he is 'sitting pretty.' But he is insecure

and he knows it. He is afraid. He owns nothing. His apartment is not his, nor his car. His job is completely at the discretion of his employer. There is nothing on which he can build for the future. Although his standard of living is good — much better than that of kings in ages past — he is as poor as any 'bindle stiff.'

For him there is no future. He will not leave to his children and to the world a well-tilled farm, a great book, or a better government. He has no history, no tradition. He cannot think of the past because it is impossible to think of the past without remembering the future. And he does not dare to think of the future, for the future is filled with terrors — poverty, sickness, death — and he has no hopes and no ambitions to make the future desirable in spite of these things.

The appearance of this man in great numbers has profoundly altered the world — and not at all for the better. There was a time when men built well because they expected their work to stand as a permanent contribution to culture. Now they build much, but durability has disappeared. Three reasons for this are: permanent things cost too much for the lower-middle-class pocket-book; permanent things do not wear out, therefore they destroy replacement business; permanent things would remind historyless man too much of his meaningless past, and, therefore, of his meaningless future. Those who live only for today cannot think of yesterday without shame, nor of tomorrow without fear.

Practically every act of modern governments is characterized by a policy of meeting the problems of today with little thought for the problems which will arise tomorrow. The feeling behind the peace of Munich was 'Let us have peace today and not worry about tomorrow until it gets here.' Unfortunately tomorrows have a way of turning into to-days. The Second World War is the

bitter tomorrow of the dishonorable peace of Munich. Hitler boasts that National Socialism will last a thousand years, but his record suggests that his boast subconsciously issues from a bad conscience.

Europe is covered with churches and castles built seven hundred years ago. Many of them are as solid now as when they were built. How long, if they are not wrecked in the meantime, will it be before our skyscrapers are naked and rusty skeletons against the sky? That, of course, is an unanswerable question, but it is extremely optimistic to hope that they will prove as durable as the Gothic cathedrals. And will our grandchildren find comfortable quarters in the flimsy wooden houses thrown up by contractors without pride of craft?

Our journalism stands as the horrible example of this change in spirit. The newspaper is the voice of the lower middle class. It gives them their drama, their philosophy, their facts. The readers, in turn, have stamped their tastes and their way of life on the news. Long-term policies have disappeared from all except the best publications — those that do not appeal to the masses. A good story is its own justification in a paper whose readers have no memory for yesterday, no thought for tomorrow. Factuality does not count, nor does honor, nor any other qualities of journalistic integrity. A nose for the sensational and an eye for business do count. The fabulous Hearst empire was built on the short memories of its readers.

Morality is disappearing before this monstrous heedlessness. True, we have and are proud of a morality of sorts. It is a morality of comfort. We are kind because unkindness causes uncomfortable situations. We feed the poor by public

relief and private charity so we shall not be haunted by their pinched faces. But this relief is not motivated by Christian charity, since few attempts, except on paper, are made to correct the evils which cause poverty in the richest nation on earth.

Sexual morality breaks down because persons who have no interest in the future can scarcely be expected to consider marriage permanent. Pregnancy is the only tragedy, because parenthood ties one to the future which the economic system and our own inclinations forbid us to face. Children are the future made flesh.

With this spirit tainting civilization, the future, for those of us who dare think of it at all, looks dark. We feel inclined to say, 'After us the deluge,' and to forget ourselves in the soft and hopeless paganism of our contemporaries. But that is what we must not do. We must cling to our past more earnestly than we do to our lives. I do not mean by this that we should become traditionalists, though there are worse things. I mean that we have a great heritage to live up to. The great saints, rebels, scientists, poets, and statesmen have left us their work unfinished. We must somehow carry on that work and preserve that heritage.

It is easy to blame our troubles on the economic system. Undoubtedly the economic pattern of our world has created this mental outlook of the lower middle class. But those of us who think can rise above the lower middle class — not economically, but morally.

And rise we must. There are thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal in Israel, but, if this were not true, our duty would still be the same.

MARK CLUTTER

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

ESSAYISTS young and old, known and unknown, are invited to compete for the Club. A prize of \$250 is offered for the most distinctive essay of 1000 words.

LET'S START WITH OYSTERS

MAN has always eaten — and praised — the oyster because he liked its succulent taste. But only in recent years have the scientists caught up with the gourmets in giving the oyster his due. To the surprise even of oyster lovers, we know now that the modest bivalve contains *all* the minerals necessary to a healthful functioning of the human body; further, that the oyster has contrived to suck them all up out of the seas in the right nutritional amounts.

Of these minerals iodine is the most interesting. You may recall that — among other uses — it is essential to a smooth functioning of the thyroid gland. In states where the iodine content in food is low, our departments of health find goitre prevalent. So oysters are widely prescribed today as a goitre preventive. Again the iron, copper, and manganese which oysters swallow and predigest from our coastal reefs make an oyster diet curative for 'pale-bloodedness,' or what your doctor diagnoses as nutritional anaemia. Lastly, calcium and phosphorus are bone builders. Oysters are rich in both — and so parents give oyster stews to children.

If oysters could talk — as they do in *Through the Looking-Glass* — they might have told the Walrus and the Carpenter a very sad story, and a moral one, of the ill effects of bad habits and laziness. All members of that crustacean family — the name is Lamellibranch — have through generations of sedentary living degenerated from the days of their forefathers. But the oyster has paid more dearly for his laziness than any of his cousins. A talkative oyster could point out — if reminiscent — that he once lived an active and locomotive life, billions of years ago, and once enjoyed in a modest way the use of feet (pedal ganglia) and even of an ear (auditory organ). But now, as a result of sitting around in a shell for so long, both have disappeared. Moreover, his genealogists report that he has degenerated in other ways. His brain (cerebral ganglia) has grown 'very

minute,' and also, which seems but natural, 'his posterior region has greatly enlarged.'

I find my friends invariably incredulous when I tell them that every oyster has a heart, a brain, a circulatory system (his blood is gray like his flesh), a very efficient respiratory mechanism (which extracts oxygen from eight to ten gallons of water a day), genitalia, lips, liver, stomach, and intestine. Most of these details escape the average oyster eater, who notices only the large tough muscle which clamps together the two halves of the shell, enabling the oyster to open up in order to feed from the sea and expel its spawn, and to snap to in the face of an enemy.

The oyster's characteristics as a parent are a scandal to more conventional Crustacea. To begin with, an oyster can be both male and female — although he can't be both at the same time. For a time in the spawning season an oyster will produce sperm only, then, a few weeks after, only eggs. The spawn are expelled and, as free swimming creatures, fertilize one another in the open sea. Zoölogists mark the oyster as one of the more prolific of sea-born organisms. Forty-nine million eggs were found in one female at the Chesapeake laboratory, and in a single male oyster nine hundred million sperm.

The oyster's way of life is the real reason why his body becomes in the end a dish for dinner that is both tender and nutritious. Our coastal reefs and harbors where the oyster settles are full of vegetable and mineral foods that have flowed into them from innumerable fresh-water streams. So the oyster finds it easy to absorb food in minute particles, to digest and predigest them for man. His lack of bone or muscles — which he is too lethargic to need — makes him a tender morsel which can be eaten whole.

'Oyster farming' is one of the oldest industries in the United States, and dates almost from the time when Cape Cod Indians taught the Pilgrim Fathers to eat oysters — which kept them alive during their first winter in America. Oysters rank foremost among the sea-food industries of the world, second

among the fisheries in the United States in point of income to our fishermen, and first in number of men employed (sixty to seventy thousand). Oysters can be taken from the waters of every Atlantic state except Maine and New Hampshire, and on the Pacific coast oystermen dredge them off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. All told, America produces an annual crop of eighteen million bushels a year, or three fourths of the world's crop. It is worth about fifteen million dollars.

After Labor Day the public begins to cry for oysters, and refrigerated express trains are ready to carry them to all parts of America. Nearly all oyster eaters have been trained in the tradition that oysters must not be eaten in the months whose names lack an R in them (May, June, July, and August). Today this R-less tradition is not much heeded — it has long been disregarded by natives of oyster-growing regions. A biological fact explains the taboo. June, July, and August are the spawning season. In those months the oyster is less plump, solid, or tasty.

Unfortunately America's attitude toward her sea-food industries was a 'get-rich-quick' one; we have dredged away much of our original heritage in shell food, without reseeded the beds or fighting the oysters' enemies. But at last we have begun to mend our ways. The United States Bureau of Fisheries, Maryland's own state bureau, and others are mobilizing to attack the problem with all the latest findings of sea conservationists. And now economists have added another point, eagerly seconded by relief bureaus in our coastal states — that a really rejuvenated oyster industry would mean 20,000 additional jobs for unemployed Americans. In short, all kinds of people are saying, with new emphasis, '*Well, why don't we start with oysters?*'

CHARLES R. WALKER

THE UNIVERSAL PET

THE choice of a household pet is one of the most perplexing problems confronting the average city dweller. Because of the limited dwelling and yard space available, the selection necessarily is narrowed down to creatures that are small in size and not too volatile and active. Generally speaking, apart-

ment dwellers are restricted to dogs, cats, birds, and fish, each of which has its advantages and disadvantages. It is always extremely difficult to choose a pet that will be affectionate and playful, and at the same time will not get its owner into a jam with the neighbors, the landlord, or the board of health.

To persons in this dilemma let me recommend as the ideal and universal pet the Mexican jumping bean. True, the Mexican jumping bean has not come into general favor, but that is solely because so few people know its merits. In the Mexican jumping bean you have something that can be kept in the smallest room, that can be taught a variety of pleasing tricks, that is affectionate, hardy, and self-sustaining. There is no feeding problem because it doesn't eat; no housing problem because it furnishes its own habitation; no sex problem because the Mexican jumping bean in the bean phase of its career has no amatory interests. It presents no housebreaking or sanitary or veterinary problem with attendant trouble or expense.

Even the worst kind of neighbors could find nothing objectionable in the Mexican jumping bean; it doesn't bite, dig up gardens, bark, meow, howl, screech, or sing. There is no exercise problem because the bean can keep in perfect condition just by jumping against the sides of a matchbox. There is no neglect problem because you can either take it in your pocket wherever you go or leave it at home without fear that it will be lonesome and unhappy; one of the strong points of the Mexican jumping bean's character is that, while highly social on occasion, it is thoroughly self-sufficient and can be happy with no other company than its own meditations.

The bibliography of the bean is meagre to the point of negligibility. The principal reason for the paucity of information regarding the little creature lies in the fact that botanists and entomologists cannot agree on which department it properly belongs in. They have passed the buck in a manner that would do credit to a couple of vice presidents. The botanists have argued that, since the bean is impelled on its journeys by an insect agent, the matter obviously is one for the entomologists. In rebuttal the entomologists have insisted that the bean is *per se* a vegetable, even though equipped with a motor, and is therefore properly to be listed

under botany. As a result of this difference of opinion, which at times has become so acrimonious that blows have been struck, the public has been left in bleak ignorance of a subject that should be of general knowledge, and pet lovers have been deprived of rare opportunities.

Because of the inability of the botanists and entomologists to agree, I have had to collect my information from both of these rival fields of science, and have been put to tremendous labor trying to reconcile conflicting opinions and allegations. Much as I dislike to cavil, it seems to me that there is something akin to the hen-and-egg priority controversy involved in this discussion. At first glance, one seems inclined to agree that the Mexican jumping bean belongs to the botanical realm, since plants preceded insects, most insects live on plants, and, were there no plants, there would be virtually no insects. But the entomologists counter with the statement that, if there were no insects to traipse around and scatter pollen, there would be no plants of certain kinds, the sex life of these species being extremely vicarious, not to say hit-or-miss. Furthermore, the entomologists point out that certain varieties of insects are absolutely independent of plant life, subsisting entirely on woolen clothing, with a marked preference for white flannel trousers. Then, too, there is the common flea, which carves out his career on the back of a dog and cares nothing for vegetable life in any of its forms. In fact, the flea positively dislikes plants because some of them furnish the burrs that lodge in the dog's hair and thus divert his attention from the flea, causing intense jealousy.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the Mexican jumping bean is not a bean in the strict sense of the word. It is, however, indigenous to Mexico and it jumps, so the name is partially descriptive. The botanists and the entomologists agree that the chassis of the bean is the fruit of certain euphorbiaceous plants of the genus *Sebastiania*; the motive power is supplied by the larva of a small moth, either *Carpocapsa saltitans* or *Grapholitha sebastianiae*. In other words, the jumping bean before it begins to jump is the seed of a bush three or four feet high, closely resembling the coffee plant. The blossoms, originally of an olive-green tint, change to buff or gray when they ripen. Each blossom has three seeds. Two of these are doomed

to the sedentary and colorless career of mere seeds, but the third is born to adventure.

In the month of May, a moth selects this lucky seed as the nursery of her progeny. She lays her egg on the petal of the flower, and as the flower goes to seed it forms a triangular shell with one convex side. Snugly enclosed in this apartment, the egg produces a worm, which in time grows to the length of perhaps half an inch with a diameter of maybe a tenth of an inch. As the worm grows older he develops inner longings. He determines to broaden his horizon. Finding his prison walls unyielding, he protests violently against his confinement, and his protest takes the form of coiling himself up and suddenly uncoiling in the manner of a spring. The uncoiling is done so spasmodically and with such force that the bean will jump clear off the ground provided the worm is a vigorous and earnest one. If he happens to be a worm of a less forceful and volatile character, he may succeed only in rolling over.

A worm worthy of the name is extremely firm — some might even call it stubborn — in his determination to get about a bit and subject himself to the broadening influences of travel. From May until November he keeps up his coiling and uncoiling. Then it dawns on him that trying to knock a hole through the side of the shell isn't going to pay off. So he substitutes science for brute and misdirected strength and bores a hole at the top of his house with his teeth or such other tools as may be available. Once out in the air, he immediately develops into a very gorgeous moth, going in for all manner of striking color effects. This happens only in a warm climate, however. If the jumping bean is exposed to too much cold, the worm's purpose to become a moth loses its fire and he dies in his shell. But he will live for about six months if kept in a moderately warm place in a temperate climate, and the warmer the temperature, the more he will jump.

In spite of his adamant determination to get out of jail, the worm insists on playing the game according to the rules. He won't cheat or take any short cuts. If you bore a hole in his shell, say about an eighth of an inch in diameter, in order to give him a hand, he refuses to accept the unfair advantage. Instead, he immediately sets to work to close the hole with a cement that he carries on his person. A smart worm will make the repair

in about an hour, which is less time than it takes for some tire repairs where the workmen have every mechanical facility at their command and use their mouths only for making faces at the tire.

A few hints on the care of the jumping bean may not be amiss at this point. As I have already mentioned, the worm does not have to be fed. Whatever he needs in the way of subsistence he probably gets from the inner walls of his shell. Nor does one have to take him out for a walk. He is exercising twenty-four hours a day as it is, and one should be very careful not to leave him loose at night, because he will make a noise that sounds like mice gnawing, which means that somebody will have to get out of bed to investigate. Furthermore, he has a penchant, which cannot be matched even by a collar button, for hiding himself under furniture. The jumping bean is very susceptible to light, even though he never seems to get any through that shell. The humane owner will garage him in a dark box at the end of a hard day's work. That immediately quiets him and gives him a chance to rest mind and body. On the other hand, beans left exposed to the glare of electric lights overnight have been known to jump themselves into a nervous breakdown.

The intelligence of these little creatures is remarkable, as is their capacity for affection. They soon learn to recognize the footsteps and voices of members of the family and to jump when spoken to. They are particularly fond of romping with children, but may protest violently if swallowed by an infant. This may cause a digestive upset of serious proportions in the interior of the infant, too. There are, to be sure, jumping beans that are sullen, morose, or actually vicious, just as there are bad dogs and cats. But ninety-nine in one hundred will reward kindness with faithful and enthusiastic service.

Jumping beans come in a variety of colors and finishes, and you should be careful to select one that will harmonize with the furniture and decoration of the home in which he is to live. For example, a bean whose shell is dark mahogany never should be kept in an Early American room, nor should the Louis Quinze beans be permitted to roam around on Chippendale furniture. For beans that are to be kept in ultra-modernistic rooms with a lot of chrome trimmings, a coat of lacquer highly polished is recommended, but for other

types of rooms persons of good taste prefer the domestic or dull finish.

The natural food of the jumping-bean moth is the maguey plant, a special cactus from which are obtained pulque and mescal, the Mexican national drinks. Any American who has indulged in even one good snifter of either of these beverages will realize immediately what makes the Mexican jumping beans jump.

E. A. BATCHELOR

NOW THAT YOUR SHOULDERS REACH MY SHOULDERS

My shoulders once were yours for riding.
My feet were yours for walking, wading.
My morning once was yours for taking.

Still I can almost feel the pressure
Of your small hands clasping my forehead
While my hands grasped your willing ankles.

Now that your shoulders reach my shoulders
What is there left for me to give you?
Where is a weight to lift as welcome?

ROBERT FRANCIS

DIAMOND

I SAW your eyes tonight, deep blue;
Sad truly, but so only made
More clear like water in the shade
Where boys peer down for bass or trout.
And so I peered to fathom you.

My gaze was far from touching ground.
Fast sloped the opal sides away
And further down assurance lay,
So that my line was all let out
With deeper caverns still to sound.

But yet joy! joy! for what I found.
Your lovely silence uttered more
Than stubborn lips would say before
And, flowering everywhere about,
Lay prisoned pearl and diamond.

There in the quiet water, shown
By sorrow vulnerable and dear,
Shone forth immaculate the fear
No glance can ever violate,
Your secret self like watered stone.

DOUGLAS V. LE PAN

THE STATE OF THE LANGUAGE

'For the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat'

WHO IS WHOM

MR. LIVINGSTON WELCH, a well-known university lecturer who reviews in the field of psychiatry for the *New York Times*, has been taken to task in print for the sentence 'It was Moses the Egyptian *whom* Freud believes created the character of the Jews,' which occurred in his review of *Moses and Monotheism*. A novel that I greatly admire, Mr. Chard Powers Smith's *Artillery of Time*, has these constructions: 'They consider themselves . . . vastly superior to all Yankees, *whom* they persuade themselves are something lower than their poor whites,' and 'Lorinda Fulton, as the wife of the Squire *whom* she suspected had already been insulted.' Possibly you noticed, in the Contributors' Column of June 1939, Laura Fullerton Gilbert's sprightly letter in rhyme on the subject of those who 'use *whom* when they mean *who*.' And do not imagine that there is anything peculiarly cisatlantic in the prevalence of this little slip. In Miss Edith Sitwell and in Mr. Joseph Hone, the official biographer of George Moore, I have come upon *whom*'s as wild as any.

The rationale of the construction that always produces *whom* for *who* is instantly clear if we show visually that the verb and its subject are parenthetical, interpolated: '*who*, Freud believes, created the character of the Jews'; '*who* (they persuade themselves) are something lower than their poor whites'; '*who* — she suspected — had already been insulted.' Here it is in eighth-grade syntax: —

'Those *whom* I hoped might be my auditors,' wrote Mr. A. Edward Newton. The *whom* is a consequence of hastily taking the pronoun for the object of the verb *hoped*, which is what it sounds like. Actually, it is the subject of *might be* and must therefore be in the nominative — *who*. The object of *hoped* is what, then? Why, the whole substantive clause *who* [= *that they*] *might be my auditors*.

Wild *who*'s are not quite so common among the literate, but even they exist. A recent note of one has come from Miss Mary E. Curtiss, of Rochester, New York: —

Richard Van Gelder in a review of W. Somerset Maugham's *Tellers of Tales* says: 'This is reminiscent of one of O. Henry's weariest efforts — a story about a man seemingly captivated by a woman *who*, it turns out, he wants to hire as a cook.'

I should be chary of reporting that Mr. Van Gelder 'says' this: all we can be sure of, in default of the manuscript, is that it is what a compositor set. There is, however, nothing inherently improbable in such a *who*; liberal grammarians now frankly argue for '*Who* do you think you're talking to?' They remind me somehow of Bierce's owls,

With regard to being mated
Asking still with aggravated
Ungrammatical acerbity: 'To *who*? To *who*?'

THE DRAGNET

MORE ABOUT '-IZE.' A startling number of correspondents, since I offered some remarks on this hard-working suffix, have expressed consternation because the *Atlantic* officially uses *serialize* and even extends it to the substantive form *serialization*. Well, why should the *Atlantic* not? *-ize* is an inalienable part of the language, as well as a very useful one in its place, and it may fairly be added to any syllabic

base that lends itself thereto with an effect not revolting to either the ear or the mind, whether the resultant term is in dictionaries or not. *Serialize* has been a standard word in the editorial vocabulary for decades. It has an unmistakable meaning and a smooth rhythm, and I should (and do) call it a first-rate example of what this indispensable suffix was given to us for. As for *serialization* — certainly no honeyed lyric among words — the excuse for it is hinted in the avowal of one correspondent who says that she has struggled long but vainly to hit upon an Anglo-Saxon substitute. If the word is unpleasing, the reason has little or nothing to do with its buried *-ize*. What six-syllable word in *-ation* escapes being a jawbreaker?

All that I wished to call attention to is the hideous result of calling upon *-ize* as a miscellaneous labor-saving device, in the way of some persons who try to perform any small mechanical operation with a screwdriver. A New York City correspondent, Miss Julia C. Stimson, credits Teachers College, Columbia University, with the use of *concretize* and *abstractize*. The intelligence finds these unexceptionable; they merely dismay the ear. For an example of *-ize* really pushed into the region of the fantastic we can turn to such exhibits as a recent question-and-answer advertisement by the firm of Bonwit Teller, sent me from Forest Hills, New York, by Mrs. John Russell Carty. One of the questions is: 'How can I be *accessorized* in one place?' — meaning, I take it, gloved, handbagged, necklaced, and so on. The answer, prompt and pat: 'In our Accessory Lounge, famous for its head-to-toe *accessorizing*.' My correspondent reports that this was 'read aloud amid exclamations of horror by the visiting firemen.'

And that is about as far as I can reach in this direction without collaboration from the head of the distinguished Taft School, who writes: —

I read with interest your reference to the linguistic atrocities which have resulted from adding *-ize* wherever it seems to be convenient. It brought to my mind a man who had just been elected mayor of a Western city on a reform ticket, one of the reforms promised having been in the matter of the crooked streets. The new mayor said that the first job of his administration would be to *paralyze* the streets. — HORACE D. TAFT, Watertown, Connecticut

FOOTNOTE ON JARGON. From far and wide come reminders that this department's observations on the art of swanky circumlocution have hardly scratched the surface of the topic. One of them says: —

My favorite example is found on the container of a well-known commercial product, stated to be *efficacious for artificial dentures*. Surely *good for false teeth* would be as adequate a description! — MIRIAM KELLY, Chicago

WASHABLE. Apropos of the troublemaking and ambiguous suffix *-able*, ponder this annotation from the University of Nebraska: —

Your reference to Dean Briggs's *non-leakable* pen reminded me of the *washable* ink sold nowadays. Not long ago the cleaners and I puzzled for some time over an inkspot on my dress. Did *washable* mean *wash-out-able* or the opposite? Though the ad implied that the ink was permanent, the spot came out.

— M. J. MEREDITH, Lincoln, Nebraska

It is a recent convention to use *washable* (of ink) as the opposite of *indelible*, but if we are not misled it is only because we happen to know the convention, not because the word says what it means and nothing else. Used of the dye in a dress, *washable* claims imperviousness to water: why, then, should it claim the opposite virtue in ink? Here is one more of the little perversities of a language in which *valuable* and *invaluable*, *bend* and *unbend*, are not antonyms but synonyms.

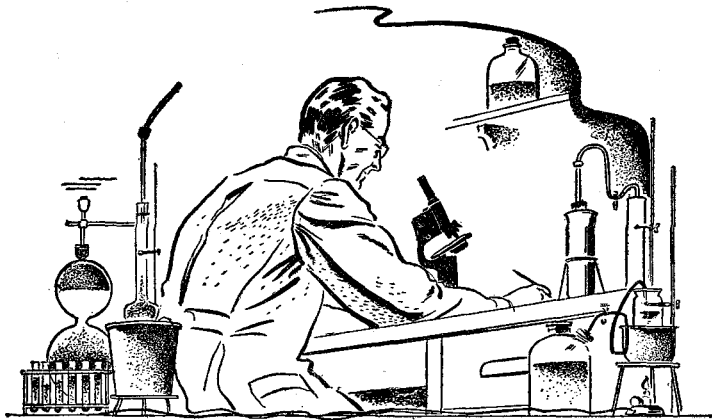
WILSON FOLLETT

More Truth Than Poetry

The new Atlantic serial
BY *Hans Zinsser*



CHAPTERS I—VI



MORE TRUTH THAN POETRY

THE BIOGRAPHY OF R. S.

BY *Hans Zinsser*

Author of 'Rats, Lice and History'

'More Truth Than Poetry' is the story of an American who never for an instant forgot the German heritage that came to him from his ancestors in 1848. Here are the twin careers which he chose to follow — the scientific career of medicine, fighting to avert plagues, and the career of the scholar and poet which he followed all his life.

Medicine has taken R. S. to the far corners of the earth. Wherever there were war and infection, there he has gone. In Serbia in 1914–1915, in the American Army in France, in Russia after the great famine, in Mexico, and in China, he has fought as a scientist, and has passed on his instruction to students at Columbia, Leland Stanford, and Harvard, at the Sorbonne and at the universities in China and Japan.

A student of men, a linguist who has read insatiably in the ancient and modern languages, a poet who has long contributed to the *Atlantic*, a lover of horses who has ridden the Western range, a philosopher who has never for a moment sacrificed his independence of mind, he stands out in our age as an admirable blend of science and the humanities.

MORE TRUTH THAN POETRY

BY HANS ZINSSER

I

'But why in thunder,' asked my friend the novelist, 'should anyone want to write a biography of R.S.? Biographical study should be reserved for men and women who have been intellectually or politically distinguished, have influenced the course of human thought or destiny, and from whose accomplishments or errors the world can derive profit. The records of the lives of great men are a sort of historical histology in which the microscope is centred on a single significant unit of a period, disclosing the forces which shaped the unusual variant and his influence upon his generation. Or, as in such relatively recent studies as *The Education of Henry Adams* or Brooks's *New England*, the subtle atmosphere of an era is clarified by filtration through the minds of superior individuals in a manner unattainable by the grosser methods of macroscopic history.'

He had learned a certain medical vocabulary from me which he took great pride in displaying.

'Now this R.S.,' he continued, 'what after all distinguishes him from thousands of others? He contributed his little farthings to scientific medicine. He went to war like ten million others. He wrote poetry that wasn't read — possibly, to do him justice, because it was published in the *Atlantic Monthly*. He made a nuisance of himself in countless academic controversies. He had so little intellectual self-control that he reacted like an Æolian harp to every wind that blew, missing what little chance he had

of giving out a really significant note in anything. And when he died, the world had no unusual reasons to mourn him.

'If you want to enter the biographical racket, why don't you do as Ludwig and Maurois do? Pick some great man who has been well written up, and compile a nice, modern, and exciting version for the education of the near-illiterate adult. Or take up somebody who has really made an impression on our civilization, such as Aimee McPherson or Jimmy Roosevelt.'

I explained to my friend that the very things he criticized were my motives for wishing to write about R.S.

For some years before his death, which occurred quite recently, I had been much thrown with R.S. by common professional interests, and he attracted me largely because he seemed so typically a child of his time. Born and brought up in the nineteenth-century traditions which prevailed until the Great War, he never succeeded in adjusting to the social and political turmoil which, since then, has shaken the foundations of a private and public life that had seemed permanently established in a reasonably stabilized world.

He appeared a noticeably average representative of that educated middle class which lived its maturer years through this transitional period, nostalgically conservative, yet trying hard to fall in with the spirit of the times; eventually realizing that, as far as he and his fellows were concerned, their main

contribution must be to carry over into the new era something of the precious past which most other people seemed intent on completely destroying. And I felt that the education and thoughts of a reasonably intelligent, average person might give a more accurate picture of these times than any biographical record of the distinguished and brilliant who might, because of their genius, belong to any age while representing none in particular.

In spite of my novelist's discouraging remarks, therefore, I suggested to R.S. himself that I write his biography, and explained — more or less as I have tried to in the preceding paragraphs — why I should like to do so. He objected, and to my surprise his opposition was not based, as I had expected, on modesty. Indeed, he was hurt. He seemed to believe that he was quite a remarkable fellow and, if a biography were to be written, it should be a serious one. But he didn't like the idea of biography for a number of other reasons.

'First of all,' he said, 'I wouldn't tell you some of the most interesting things about me, because I'm ashamed of them. Look at Rousseau. Everyone gloats over the *Confessions*. If he hadn't written them, people would occasionally read the *Contrat Social* and the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, and realize his intelligence instead of using him for psychoanalytical genius-snooping.

'Me,' he said ungrammatically, 'I have been like most other people, both a hero and a coward; an idealist and a humbug; a Galahad and a sensualist. Virtue and the Devil have been constantly rolling over each other within me. "*Tras la Cruz esta el Diablo*" — behind the Cross is always the Devil, as Cervantes said. Taking it by and large, I had more fun when the Devil was on top, and I have often been thankful that Martin Luther was such a bad shot with the ink bottle. But I am far from considering myself hopelessly wicked for that reason. For after all, man made the

Devil in his own image, and if there were no Devil we should have to invent one. Yet I shouldn't like that to go into a biography — certainly not with documentation.

'Besides,' he continued, 'I'm a doctor. And I'm sick of books by doctors and about doctors. It's a racket. The whole publicizing of culture is a racket. Everybody's a little educated nowadays, and they're all hungry for easy culture — medicine, philosophy, mathematics, chemistry, literature. They want books about books. Of course you can't blame them. People are too busy to read Goethe or Voltaire or Cervantes or Kant. Can you see the citizen poring over "*Zweitens der Grundsatz dass Realitäten (als blosse Bejahung) einander niemals logisch widerstreiten, ist ein ganz anderer Satz von dem Verhältnisse der Begriffe, bedeutet aber weder in Ansehung irgend eines Dinges an sich selbst (von diesem haben wir keinen Begriff) das mindeste?*" He can get it much more easily from Will Durant or Alpern or Fuller. It's more fun to read Van Wyck Brooks in a hammock than Emerson, or Ludwig than Goethe. They want it in hypodermics or like liver extract.'

I quote this only as an example of how he was apt to run on at the slightest provocation — always, I may say, including in his reasonable talk a lot of things about which he knew practically nothing at all. This was at the same time his defect and his charm, for — often — the more illogical and excited he was, the more he illustrated the confused reaction of his class to the things going on in the modern world. He became what Rachilde calls a '*cerveau enflammé*.'

I quieted him by telling him that I had no idea of writing about him as a doctor. 'The medicine,' I said, 'is purely incidental. I have no thought of making you the excuse for another Odyssey in Wonderland, like Victor Heiser's, or a Science and Health, like Dr. Carrel's. I should like to write about you and your re-

actions more or less as Henry Adams wrote about himself: the times filtering through your personality — you yourself an example of your kind of people.

'You see,' I fortified my point, 'Henry Adams was an American, blood and bone of him. You represent the recent stock. It would be amusing to contrast the reactions of a relatively parthenogenetic American with those of the immediate post-Iroquois strain.'

At this juncture he broke into a tirade about the advantages of being an outsider. He quoted Samuel Butler. He then started on the Anglo-Saxons in America, who regarded everyone who lived among them without Anglicizing his name as something inferior. I let him run down. But I did get him interested.

Through the ensuing years, there was a tacit understanding between us that he would write, for my perusal and editing, his recollections and thoughts. The responsibility of connecting them into an acceptable sequence was to be mine, and I was to be permitted to write — in the third person, of course — any additional information which I could gather from our frequent conversations. I was also to have complete possession of any papers he left behind, and I fell heir to notes and keepsakes, unfinished articles, poems, and even a Rabelaisian series of unfinished fairy tales, that he would otherwise have destroyed. But, faithful to our friendship, I have suppressed many things that I know he would not have liked to see in print and which, indeed, were often disgraceful.

The greater part of this biography, written in the first person, is almost unedited from the pen of R. S. himself. In consequence, it is in places badly written, and sometimes vague and discursive. The smoother writing, in the third person, is my own.

My friend the novelist, like many others of my literary acquaintances, questioned my ability to accomplish so difficult a task, since I had published only one non-medical book, which is now

printed in the Blue Ribbon series, together with the *Complete Dog Book* and *The Sexual Life of Savages*. And, of course, I am considerably intimidated by the modern insistence on what is called 'craftsmanship' by professional writers. But I took courage from Sainte-Beuve's remark: '*Rien ne m'est pénible comme le dédain avec lequel on traite souvent des écrivains du second ordre, comme s'il n'y avait place que pour ceux du premier.*'

I approached my task with modesty, therefore, hoping that I might acceptably convey in this study the portrait of a representative of that generation, now rapidly disappearing, — like the T-model Ford, — whose lives bridged the transition from horses to gasoline, from gaslight to electric bulbs, from Emerson and Longfellow to T. S. Eliot and Joyce, from stock companies to the movies and the radio, and so forth, and so forth — in short, from Victoria to Mrs. Windsor.

If there appears, in this account, occasional confusion of subject and sequence, this — apart from my possible ineptitude — is due to very reluctant co-operation by R. S. and to the fact that, although in his science he had some excuse for calling himself a specialist, he was one of those people on whom all controversial questions of his time acted like horseflies on a half-broken mule. The work of the last year, however, was much facilitated by the fact that his doctors persuaded him to stop drinking.

II

R. S. speaks of his parents, their marriage and their death: —

Autumn is the season which, more than any other time of the year, brings back to me the bittersweet pageant of the past. In the Hudson Valley in the days before motorcars, — when my horse's feet went slushing through fallen leaves which a gust of wind brought blowing and tumbling across the roads, — the swamp maples turned first, and

then the other trees and bushes, with the wild vines making bright cardinal patches across the great rocks; and the hills, gaudy and carnival-like in the noon sunshine, would grow sombre with a majestic mournfulness as the short afternoons chilled into dusk. The sweet, acrid wood smoke hung in the air as I rode past a farmhouse, and at home, when the saddle was off and a forkful of hay pitched down to the blanketed mare, there would be a log fire in the big stone fireplace that smoked just enough to let one smell the wood.

There would be a cold supper, a bottle of wine, and the affectionate banter of intimacy. And, before bedtime, a stroll to the stable — warm and dark — with the beloved smell of horses and hay; a stamping and a turning of heads in the stalls when the lantern light swung around the shadows of the beams, with perhaps a barn swallow waking from sleep and fluttering into the rafters. Then back under cold stars hung low in a brightly black sky, with just chill enough to send one off to bed with a jump from the opened window to the blankets.

It was in the autumn that my father died. I was sitting beside his bed, waiting. He had looked into the eyes of death for two years; at first, a little frightened and shocked. But as the sense of inevitableness became a habit, and pain more constant and severe, he complained only of the cruel slowness with which death comes — so long after his coming is announced. He died at night and — as I have seen it so often — his mind cleared during the last hours. When the end finally came, there was a pressure of my hand, and a smile. The smile remained to soften the lines of suffering in his face when he was dead, and I found myself sitting there beside him, with the first light of day creeping into the windows — feeling, for the moment, utterly alone in a world which I had never imagined without him.

He had no belief in God. He had no

hope of immortality. And in these negations he did not weaken during the months of agony. If he shed a tear, it was for the sorrow of leaving us who loved him so deeply. He believed that man's immortality lies in the offspring of his body and mind, and wanted no consolation for what he accepted as the inevitable destiny of all living things.

When he died, my mother's life was over. She had met him, a gay student of twenty-two, with the black-red-gold ribbon — later for a historic moment the colors of the German Republic — across his breast. She was the daughter of a disgraced political dissenter in the Black Forest, a lawyer who would neither do homage to the political powers nor shave off the beard that proclaimed his allegiance to a defeated cause. The man of her heart went to America, to the promised land where there was still room for all the free spirits whose wings were clipped at home by bigotry and political oppression. The English love liberty, Heine has said, as a legitimate wife — not too caressingly, but with a sense of ownership and protectiveness; the French, he said, love her as a mistress — always to be wooed in order to be retained. The Americans, my father added, treat her like a familiar drudge — so sure of her that they may abuse and neglect her. She will grow old and feeble in time, and will perhaps die altogether. He did not live long enough to know how nearly his prophecy was to be fulfilled. For, in his day, liberty in America was young and vigorous. And up to the end of his life the words 'freedom' and 'liberty' had a sense of solemnity for him. He loved Abraham Jacobi and idolized Hans Kudlich, who said: *'Ihr Deutsche! haltet die Nacken steif!'* — and he wanted to be buried next to Carl Schurz in the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, where he now lies.

He came to America with pockets almost empty, but with the help of an older brother, already in full career,

soon turned his chemical training to good use. But it was no sudden affluence; and, meanwhile, the dark-eyed girl in the Schwarzwald was having a hard time. Her mother had died — the father a little later; there was hardly any money. She went for a while as a governess to France and taught a little Monsieur de Something de Something very little German, in return for which she perfected her French, confirmed her instinct for social formality, and lost a great deal of national prejudice. But I can imagine her often, on autumn evenings, wandering in the château garden thinking wistfully of the merry young chemist who was so sad on leaving her, and who had said that he would never stop loving her, wherever he might be.

And then something happened that seemed like a miracle. A letter came, like the answer to a wish in a fairy tale.

The young chemist had written home. Home was a schoolmaster's house on the Rhine, in a village conveniently located for harboring refugees at night, when they tapped on the kitchen shutters after the children were asleep — or were supposed to be. Often they were not, as my father told me, and they would lie in their beds in the attic, wide-eyed and alert, listening in silent excitement to the sounds of hurried meals and furtive departures below.

The broad-shouldered old schoolmaster was alone now — his wife dead and all the seven birds flown from the roost into the wide world. Four sons — a doctor, two merchants, and a chemist — in New York; three daughters married, one of them in America. He spent long evenings in his garden — a lonely old man — thinking of the past, and hoping for letters. 'I am now in a position to marry her,' the young chemist wrote. 'But it is two years since we have seen each other and we were then very young. Does she love me enough to journey almost a quarter of the circumference of the world, to settle in a new,

strange, and curiously unfriendly country, with no one but myself to be home to her?'

On a happy day the letter came to her from the old schoolmaster, whom she had never seen. 'The boy loves you and wants you to marry him,' it said. 'You may think you are still in love with him and, being a brave girl, you may have courage enough to go to him and fulfill your promise. But you are very young and very lonely, and neither of us can tell how these two years among the clever Yankees may have changed him. But if you think you are sure of your feelings, I will take you to him myself. And if we find him the same warm-hearted and high-spirited boy we knew and loved, I will see you married to him before I come back. If not, you shall return with me to the Rhine, for I have sore need of a daughter.'

They met in the city of her birth — Freiburg im Breisgau. The old man arrived with a heavy bag of long-hoarded gold pieces. America was much farther away then than it is now, and the schoolmaster was a very old man. But he was also a very gallant one: flirted with his son's girl all the way over; rolled her in blankets; tucked her in at night; bought her all the simple things he could afford — in short, it was a sort of pre-honeymoon.

That's how my father and my mother were finally brought together. No parson, however; a justice of the peace at the City Hall and a party in the little wooden house near the chemical factory, with Asmus, the mining engineer-poet, Onkel Fritz, the musician-doctor, and all the jolly half-homesick exiles for whom America was a great adventure where their talents and training had full play but where, in some respects, their freedom was like that of the desert. To the Americans of their own class and culture, though there were plenty of them, they had no easy access, and with the others they wanted little contact. So for many years they remained in a sort of cultural

oasis of their own, — socially and intellectually self-sufficient, — waiting perhaps a little arrogantly for this country to seek them out, instead of exploring. We spoke German at the table until my father's death. Sunday-evening dinners were patriarchal reunions of a clan, imposed by a custom of affectionate reverence, with open house for waifs for whom talent or science or music or sheer loneliness had loosened the latch-string.

These exiles had no complaints to make of their new home, and they became politically Americans with a speed and thoroughness surprising to all who did not understand their fervid admiration of our institutions. But when they had left behind all the things they had hated at home, they rediscovered in their own hearts the love for the many other things they missed in their new surroundings.

Now he was dead. And after fifty-two years of journeying together my mother's life was over. She wanted to go back to Westchester County to the house where they had spent so many happy years. We younger ones had a little farmhouse not far from the home place, in one of the narrow valleys through which the brooks run down to the Hudson. To this she came, with two maids and her chauffeur.

Maids were different in those days, and chauffeurs were usually old men and recent coachmen. They were not birds of passage and servants. They had little pay compared with today, but their place of service was their home. They stayed a long time, and there was affection in their relationships. My mother was a benevolent tyrant. Her maids were praised and scolded, supervised, bullied, and petted. My mother knew about their families, their small brothers and sisters, and their troubles. They stood in awe of her a little — but loved her a great deal. Now, in her affliction, they cherished her with humble devotion.

She wanted to be alone and, with them, she was alone — and taken care of. We brothers took turns visiting her. One of us came to see her each day, driving up from New York. We would find her sitting on the lawn in front of the house, silently knitting — a pitifully small and shrunken figure against the blazing grandeur of the autumnal hills. At a suitable distance, on one side, sat Anna, her maid; just far enough to be out of the way, but near enough to hear when she was spoken to. Somewhere, near by, John the ex-coachman was busy, tinkering at some useless task, in order to be within reach. Thus, when I came, I would find her, wrapped in a fur coat, sitting — with the dignity and poise of great sorrow — among the falling leaves.

She roused herself when we came and chatted reminiscently, and took great pleasure in our coming. But we whom she had loved so dearly for ourselves were now obviously only what was left of him. Her life was over, and in two weeks she followed him. Gradually, she had grown more feeble for no physically noticeable reason. She seemed to die of his death.

III

R. S. speaks of his birth and childhood, and since he seemed to derive a nostalgic satisfaction from this, I allowed him to run on — though he introduced much that is quite irrelevant: —

My birth fell into the period intermediary between the methods of Dr. Slop and the modern aseptic obstetrics — 'twilight sleep,' prenatal and after care — which have made childbirth a not too unpleasant interruption between a dinner party and the hunt races. In May 1847, Semmelweis had introduced chlorine water into the wards of the Vienna hospitals, and the deaths in childbirth had dropped within a year from 12 per cent to 1.2 per cent. The horrors which Dr. Holmes describes in his eloquent essay were recent and

dreadful memories. To be sure, there was not yet any intelligence about birth control and — in this sense — I cannot escape the belief that to some extent I really should not have been born. For there were eight years between me and my next older brother. Of course when I came I was not, for that reason, unwelcome; for my parents were intrinsically good and tender of heart.

Yet it is a strange and terrifying thought that a human life — long and adventurous, full of joy and sorrow, effort and disappointment, pregnant with possibilities for good and evil, for suffering, for vice and virtue — should be begotten more or less accidentally, for no particular reason except the enchantment of an early harvest moon.

In the famous letter received by the late Professor Wheeler, Wee-Wee, the King of the Termites, commenting on the inferiority of human society to that of his own species, says: 'And owing to the absence of eugenics and birth control, and to your habits of fostering all weak and inefficient individuals, there is not even the dubious and slow-working apparatus of natural selection to provide for the organic fixation of castes through heredity.' Wee-Wee is quite right, and among termites this last offspring would not have been in the planned order of society and might well have been omitted without serious loss.

At any rate, there I was; and, thanks to the newer obstetrics, my mother had not too much discomfort of me, and I was neither rendered imbecile nor paralyzed by the procedures of passing — in the words of Goethe — through that arch under which all candidates for immortality must pass.

Incidentally, the slowness of the progress which this science of obstetrics made through the ages to arrive even at the point which it had reached at the date of my birth is extraordinary. The Greeks had a kind of midwife. Only difficult cases called for a physician, but — strangely enough in a race so athletic —

Simon Magnetes records that three out of every five childbirths were difficult ones. In the oldest sculptures, according to Haeser, the habitual position during birth was a 'kneeling' (probably squatting) one; and this seems a habitual phenomenon among aboriginal races, often retained long after their removal from primitive surroundings.

While riding the Roosevelt Hospital ambulance, not yet too old to blush while performing professional service, I encountered several instances of emergency childbirth in the San Juan Hill Negro district, in which the prospective mothers refused to move from the squat in a dark corner of the room. In one case, in order to do my duty of holding back the head, I was forced to lie in an awkward position on a very dirty floor, while performing my probably quite unnecessary functions. But I was young and compassionate, and there was in my heart that pride of devotion which suppresses disgust and ennobles service. Fortunately, the night was bitter cold, and I had a thick overcoat to spread beneath me. But I remember well the difficulties I had kicking a little dog away from my legs, and my worry at being helpless to stop the first-born — a lovely naked pickaninny of three — from looting my ambulance bag while all this was going on. It was done in the dim light of a gas flame; but within the hour we were all — including the little bag robber — riding merrily to the Sloane Maternity in the ambulance.

But to come back to obstetrics: in this art the Greeks did not advance beyond the skill of the ancient Hindus. The latter already had midwives, — four to a case, — knew quite a lot about the stages of pregnancy, tied off the umbilical cord, hung it about the neck of the child, and actually (Susruta) described abnormal positions *in utero*, recommending 'version' in certain cases, to pull down the legs.

In the second century, Soranus of

Ephesus wrote a considerable work on diseases of women, in which he included much crude and — to our modern minds — murderous advice about manipulatory aid in first deliveries. Incidentally, living in Rome at the time of Pliny and Trajan, Soranus may be regarded as the first advocate of birth control reliably on record, giving advice which — in principle — is not so unlike that which is now prohibited in the United States mails.

But we are talking about my own birth, and not writing a history of obstetrics. By the time I was born, bacteriology had begun to reveal the principles which made obstetrics, as indeed all other forms of surgery, humane and relatively safe. The rest was technique. And obstetrics had advanced almost as much — if not more — by the principle of noninterference as by safeguarding procedure. Before Semmelweis, it is likely — though we have no statistics to prove it — that fewer women would have died if midwives and doctors had been prohibited by law from coming near the prospective mother until just before delivery of the placenta. Some of the women whom I attended as ambulance surgeon, and who came through quite robustly, had had their babies either by themselves or with the sympathetic and, fortunately, timid ‘assistance’ (in the French sense) of a policeman or a streetcar conductor long before I arrived. In one case a policeman — himself a father, as he later told me — had tied off the cord with a shoestring.

One poor girl, — I recall her with the reminiscent tenderness of my youthful compassion, — ashamed of having a baby without a husband, had taken a room in an obscure boardinghouse, with the intention of hiding her disgrace and remaining alone until it was all over. When the crisis came, her nerves gave way and she called for help. I well remember the miserable hallway, the indignant drudge of a landlady, — with bare arms, broom, and mobcap, howling

the respectability of her hovel, — the dim hall bedroom, and the agonized, lovely young thing on the dirty bed. It all went well. I don’t know what became of her afterward. The Sloane nurse told me later that she left the hospital quite happy, with a frail baby in her arms. But she never did give her right name, and was ‘O.W.’ (out of wedlock) on the records.

There is not, in our present society, any greater example of hard luck than that of having an illegitimate baby. The only imaginably greater misfortune might be having illegitimate twins or triplets. The only case of that kind I can think of, though of course it must have happened often, is that of Robert Burns’s second love, the patient Jean, who actually did have illegitimate twins — later legalized, though not until, I believe, there had been one or two (I’m not sure) ‘love children’ from other attractive girls in between. And, of all things, this had to happen in Scotland. What a man! Not because he produced the children, but because he could keep right on writing poetry. Indeed, it seemed to stimulate him.

About other obstetrical adventures I may have more to say in later chapters of this narrative. To the sensitive young disciple of medicine, these experiences are perhaps the most profoundly stirring in his education as a human being.

To come back to my own birth: with a knowledge of the circumstances and the state of the science at the time of my entrance into this turbulent planet, it is not difficult to reconstruct just what happened.

Having thoroughly dried me, old Dr. Gulecke slapped me vigorously on the buttocks, leaving across them the scarlet imprint of four bony fingers, thereby stirring me, as was intended, to the indignant protest that filled my lungs with their first sweet air. It brought a healthy flush of anger to my little wrinkled face; but — nothing perturbed — the doctor turned me over to reassure

himself as to the kind I was and, wiping his brow with the reverse side of the towel with which he had dried me, handed me to Frau Schultz.

It was, no doubt, an amazingly casual and prosaic performance. There was no rustle of angel wings, there were no strains of heavenly music; but for the tired girl in the next room — who looked then just like the faded photograph that I have on the desk before me — a miracle had been performed that stirred her lips in grateful prayer. And when the competent Frau Schultz — having rolled me and smeared me, dabbed and swathed me — laid me, with a last professional and totally unnecessary wipe of the nose, in the waiting arms, she hugged me to her breast and went immediately to sleep.

Frau Schultz, I am sure, began to tidy up, and the doctor to fasten his cuff links, long before they gave a thought to my poor father, who was pacing up and down on the floor below in his wrinkled clothes, anxiety and a feeling of guilt struggling for mastery within him.

Then the doctor — as they always do — drove away with the air of a worker of miracles.

The minds of little children are like rolls of cinema film on which long series of uncoordinated impressions, gathered by the senses, are caught. Usually most of these fade completely in later years. It is only here and there, in the earlier years, that an experience impresses itself with sufficient coloring to remain as a memory in later life.

My earliest memory goes back to when I must have been between one and two years old. It was like a vaguely remembered dream until I found later, in speaking of it, that it was based on fact. I remembered clouds in a blue sky, against which the spars of a ship were swinging to and fro, and at the same time I heard a little tune sung with German words: —

*Schlaf', mein liebes Kind.
Draussen bläst der Wind.
Hör! des Nachbars Hündchen bellt!
Alles schläft in der weiten Welt. . . .*

I can't remember any more of it. Later I learned that I was taken abroad as a baby, and that my father often sat on the deck of the old *Moselle*, which still had masts and spars for emergency rigging, and sang me to sleep on his lap with the little tune.

As a boy, I would often — especially before going to sleep at night — hear the little song, see the swinging spars against clouds scudding through a blue sky, and go to sleep happily. And a warm wave of affection floods my heart even now for the young, blond man whose love enclosed me while he lived and whose hand I have felt caressingly on my head throughout my life, whenever I was in need of comforting.

At times the dead are closer to us than the living, and the wisdom and affection of the past stretch blessing hands over our lives, projecting a guardian care out of the shadows and helping us over hard places. For there are certain kinds of love that few but the very wise fully understand until they have become memories.

Our dog, a mongrel poodle, was an important part of my life then, as dogs have been more or less ever since. He had not been ruined by too much social life. Let a dog know too many people, and he turns out badly. Bring him up in a family where he is always about with a few people, shares house and board, lies by the fire, runs with the children, steals in the kitchen, and sleeps under a bed, and you have — at five or six — a wise and affectionate and altogether lovable dog.

The same principles apply to people, as Isaac Newton well knew, because it is said that, when he was first asked to join the Royal Society, he declined — saying that he was afraid it 'might increase the circle of his acquaintances.'

When I lay awake in the very early

mornings the birds would begin to chirp in the vines that grew along the wall under my window. They were only humble city sparrows, but they made a merry confusion of sound. And when my mother came in to bid me good-morning she always said: 'Did you hear *your* birds?' She gave me the birds as my own, as Anatole France's mother gave him the rose on the wallpaper. And ever since I have thought of the early-morning sparrows as my own particular property.

The walk in the Park was the event of the mornings. I was accompanied by the dog, on a leash, with a fine green collar, and we were both in the care of the 'Rothe Anna,' a faithful, deep-chested, redheaded girl from the Schwarzwald. The dog, being on a leash and thereby protected, made brave growling jumps at squirrels and birds, and I ran ahead, pulling a little express wagon or rolling a hoop. With other children I had little association on these walks, because my English was distinctly foreign. I do remember hitting another little boy over the head with the shaft of the express wagon one day, but have forgotten the preliminaries. It was the earliest example of a great many similar episodes that, in later life, gave me the reputation of having a quick temper; though, as I think them over, they can all be explained by the fact that — not growing very big — I was quarrelsome merely to keep up my self-respect.

Anna always straightened out any difficulties the dog or I got into, and brought us home happy. She was a good Catholic and worried a great deal about my irreligious upbringing. So, on our walks, she often entertained me with stories of saints; and once, just as we were standing under a big elm in the Mall, she pointed upward and said: '*Der liebe Gott wohnt dort droben.*' For a long time I believed that God lived in an elm tree in Central Park, and often I would stand under it and gaze upward, hoping to get a glimpse of Him.

Onkel Fritz was a doctor. Of course, I had known him from the beginning in the impersonal way in which a very small boy becomes interested in a shaggy head from which a single sharp and kindly blue eye gazes at him. Little children and dogs have no sense of good looks or ugliness; and it was not until much later that I realized with some surprise that the rest of the world thought Onkel Fritz an unusually unprepossessing person.

By that time he had passed his fiftieth year, and gray threads had begun to accentuate the blondness of his unbrushed hair and patchy beard. While not exactly fat, he was broad and stout, which made him look smaller than he was; and he was always very untidy. His most noticeable feature was his one sharp and humorous eye, of a very light sky-blueness; and most interesting to me was a deep scar which went up diagonally from the other — the blind one — for an inch and a half across his forehead, so deep and adherent to the bone that I could press my finger into it when he held me on his knee — unless he had, as was usual with him, shoved his glasses up from his nose, over his eyebrows. This was a habit of his, and he seemed to me always to be shoving his gold-rimmed spectacles out of the way in this manner, whenever he wanted to look at something.

The scar, he always told me, was the result of his falling on a rake when he was about as big as I was. Later, when I found out that he had acquired it in a duel with heavy sabres, he admitted the duel, but said that he had had to fight the Czar of Russia because he had stuck his tongue out at him at a court reception. This scar of Onkel Fritz's made him a hero to me, and I often imagined him, with his spectacles on his forehead, dressed just as he was then, in striped trousers, a black coat, and stiff collar, — and, most illogically, with the to-be-acquired scar already in place, — slashing away at a frantically parrying and terri-

fied Czar who was jumping about in an ermine cape, with a crown on his head.

The reason I loved Onkel Fritz so early in my life was mainly, I believe, because he took me seriously. The ladies and gentlemen to whom I was often embarrassingly introduced at afternoon *Kaffee* had the habit of making themselves and me ridiculous with baby talk and silly questions, calling me *kleiner Mann*, and hiding their essential lack of interest under an assumed delight in my resemblance to my parents and similar rubbish. Onkel Fritz made me a contemporary. He was no more 'grown-up' with me than he was with the dog. He seemed to realize that we were both of us sensible and intelligent people, and that conversation with me was more profitable than the idle talk of the others about the coffee table.

Whenever I look at an Italian primitive, my feet begin to hurt. The reason for this is that, as a small boy of ten to fourteen, I was often taken along on excursions through Italy in the company of this Onkel Fritz, who felt it his duty to form my taste, as he called it.

Onkel Fritz, whose polyphemoid appearance I have just described, was an odd character. A successful dermatologist and syphilographer in New York in the 1860's and 1870's, he retired from practice at a relatively early age, bought himself a house and garden in the lovely *Kurort* Wiesbaden in Hessen-Nassau, and devoted himself to playing the fiddle and collecting folk songs. I lived with him while I was sent to school for one year in Wiesbaden, and remember him most vividly either pacing the upper hall in his Jaeger underwear, practising Kreutzer *études*, or lying late in bed in a sunny room lined with bound volumes of music, reading scores and apparently hearing the silent notes as he read. Later in life he took up old paintings and became professor of art and curator of old

paintings in the small but excellent local 'Museum.' His trips to Italy with us were therefore, in a manner, professional, and he being by instinct a pundit, and the rest of the family having become quite skillful at getting out from under, mine was the helpless mind which he determined to improve.

I was of value to Onkel Fritz in two respects on these travels, a nuisance in all others. My chief usefulness — one from which I myself gathered considerable enjoyment — was in regard to keeping other travelers out of the second-class compartments in which four of us managed almost invariably, thanks to me, to occupy the space intended for six.

Bribery of the conductor was often quite adequate. But when this appeared impracticable, the same result could be achieved with my help by one or the other of two systems. One — the most satisfactory to me — was to ornament my face and forehead heavily and not inartistically with the red and blue crayons which I carried for the purposes of juvenile sketching, until I presented the appearance of a horrid little boy all broken out with smallpox or leprosy. Then, when we arrived at a station with eager second-class passengers milling about for vacancies, I stuck my head out of the window. This, to the accompaniment of considerable virtuosity in distorting my childlike features into grimaces of great suffering, — an accomplishment in which I took pride, and often practised before a mirror, — quite successfully protected us on most occasions, though it once led to embarrassing attentions from a traveling physician. Onkel Fritz's other method was to train me to loud and heartbroken weeping during our stops at stations, a subterfuge which, while not as regularly effective as the former, still saved us from many a crowded and unpleasant journey.

The other function in which I was useful to Onkel Fritz was in this matter of

old paintings. I take it for granted that he knew a great deal about them, and I am sure that he had much genuine pleasure from them. But his enjoyment was infinitely enhanced by the act of explaining and displaying his learning. The impulse to educate my taste, to start me in the right directions of appreciation, was — though in itself not entirely insincere — yet subsidiary, I believe, to the didactic passion. But it was hard on my feet, and all I gained from it artistically at that time was an aversion to Giotto's, Fra Angelico's, Lippo Lippi's, and such, which lasted until I returned to these galleries in later life — when, strangely enough, I found that deep in long-unexplored crevices of my mind there lingered memories of the good old man's enthusiasm which gave me understanding I should not have had without him.

IV

R. S. speaks of his earliest religious impressions and of his school days. But since the school in which he spent eight years was presided over by a Jew, he wandered off into a diatribe on anti-Semitism. I tried to divert him from this dangerous topic, because I feared it might ruin the book. But there was no stopping him.

In assembling material for the preceding chapters my problem was chiefly that of selecting from a mass of notes and conversations those episodes in the childhood of R. S. which I believed might best illustrate domestic environment and personal relations. Since it is obviously difficult to create a complete picture by this method, it has seemed advisable, from time to time, to fill out the background of these disconnected sketches with explanatory information.

It is apparent that family life, habits, language, and cultural influences, during the childhood of R. S., remained essentially German. But it should be understood that the Germanicness of this fam-

ily was that of the Rhineland and the Black Forest, a variety which penetrating historians like Sorel, Brinton, and others have recognized as clearly differentiated from that of Prussia, the Central States, and Austria. For the Rhineland and the southern border provinces had long been under the influence of French thought and political doctrine. They had been frequently invaded and had 'felt deeply the republican propaganda of the French Revolution.' There had even been a Jacobin Club at Mainz during that time, and the aspirations toward civil liberty then fostered were never again completely lost. Moreover, many of the peasantry were landholders whose general outlook was more like that of the French post-revolutionary peasant proprietors than that of the more feudally governed people of the rest of Germany and of Prussia. In consequence, as we shall see in a later chapter, the political storms which broke after 1830 swept over these regions more violently than they did over the eastern provinces.

Families emigrating to America from the Rhineland, therefore, fitted immediately and with complete contentment into those free political institutions for which they had unsuccessfully struggled at home. Yet, though thus politically acclimatized from the very beginning, they long remained culturally and socially isolated from Americans of their own class and educational level. This was due partly to their own conceit and lack of social adaptability, and in part to the provincialism of the American upper classes, who at that period seemed quite unaware that there were cultivated people among foreigners who immigrated and kept them at arm's length. R. S., who spoke no English until he was ten, though eventually completely absorbed into the life of America, always felt himself — probably because of this early social isolation — to some extent an outsider. This may explain much about his later reactions: —

My mother was brought up in a convent in the Black Forest. In girlhood she had been a pious Catholic. But something happened to her faith early in her married life. Was it that she was carried away by the tide of the new world of scientific skepticism into which she had entered, or was it passive acquiescence, unwillingness to be out of harmony with her surroundings? Probably, being almost altogether heart and not at all a logical person, she concluded that love was enough and that ritual was unessential for what she valued in religion. At any rate, she made no active objection to the complete omission of any kind of religious instruction for her unchristened boys.

In later years, however, I often wondered whether we had not, all of us, — my father included, — taken too much for granted. Much later, thinking about this, I remembered hearing her express horror when Voltaire was mentioned (probably reminiscence of the convent, for she was essentially an unlearned person), and her unwillingness to read either Strauss or Renan when I offered them to her. At any rate, at that time it never occurred to any of her family — at least it was never expressed — that she might have been silently faithful through all those years, with so complete a trust in the goodness of a reasonable God that she felt content, for herself and for her children, to dispense with the forms, so long as the true spirit of her own Christianity could be instilled into their daily lives in feeling and in action.

I suspect that this may have been the case; for I alone, being by many years the youngest and, therefore, most intimately her companion, had occasion to be with her in moments when — with no one but a beloved child to observe her — she relaxed into expressions of that longing to believe that God exists which is the source of faith.

I remember how, on several occasions, in the cold and noisy city dusk of Christmas Eve, unknown to anyone else, my

mother took me to the Cathedral of the Paulist Fathers on 59th Street. In her victoria, drawn by the two dapple grays I so admired, we drove through the crowded streets. All about us, in this neighborhood of tenement houses, tired-looking and poorly dressed people were hurrying homeward with packages under their arms; shop windows were bright; and the man with the long stick was going about lighting the gaslights on the lampposts. At the corner, under the elevated railroad, August the German coachman was left to walk the horses, while my mother took me by the hand and led me up the stone steps and through the padded swing doors into the church. It was chilly and dim in the great Gothic vaults, but the altar was brightly lighted; here and there were a few poor old drudgy-looking women and a shabby man or two, kneeling with bowed heads in front of wicker chairs placed in rows. There was a little chapel on one side, where there were candles burning below a high crucifix, with red, spreading spots on the hands and feet of the Saviour who hung suspended from it. And over a small altar there was a large picture of the Virgin.

Here Mother would sit, and draw me close against her lap. She did not pray — at least, not audibly — and she did not speak; and I was too subdued to move or to say anything by a sense of frightened but still gentle awe. Perhaps I shared her feelings more than I then could comprehend. For, in later years, I found myself going into Catholic churches — Saint-Sulpice, Chartres, my childhood's Saint Paul's, and even the Cathedral in South Boston — to sit for a few moments as I used to sit with her, silently and with no realized purpose, except perhaps to feel again the uncomprehended, mystical solemnity which held me peacefully quiet, so many years ago on Christmas Eve, with my body pressed against her knees; and to remember how she softened for me the shock of being again suddenly in the bustling

ugliness of the cold and sordid street, held me close to her and kissed me before entering the carriage to drive home.

I was the youngest of four sons, and, as I have said, there was a gap of eight years between me and my next older brother. As a result, I was much spoilt, and my mother, wishing to keep me near her as long as possible, delayed sending me to school until my twelfth year. Meanwhile, I was reasonably well taught by tutors, male and female, both in this country and during a winter at Pallanza on Lago Maggiore; but eventually it became obvious that, by this method, I should develop into an incurable sissy.

The choice of a school was not easy in those days. The public schools, to which a man of my father's democratic convictions was inclined to send me, were not good enough, and the prospects there even of learning to speak grammatical English were nil. He had solved the problem in the cases of two older brothers by sending them abroad to live with my uncle and attend the *Gymnasium*. In my case, he abandoned this idea in deference to my mother. But he looked into the possibilities of the New England boarding schools which were then being started in more or less acknowledged imitation of the English public schools. It did not take him long to decide that this was not what he wanted for me.

These institutions were scholastically much superior to public schools — though not nearly as much so as he thought they should have been. The boys were an attractive lot, as a rule, but were sent to these schools as much for snob appeal as for other advantages. And, throughout, there was a deep Anglo-religious atmosphere which my father believed had no place in secondary education, and which repelled him. After taking me to visit one of these institutions over the week-end and attending the compulsory chapel services, he said: 'When I sat there, listened to a mediæ-

vally stupid sermon, and saw all the medicine men going through their ritual exercises, I felt that if any of our family went to a place like that, both your poor grandfathers would roll over in their graves.'

As a matter of fact, I am inclined to think that my father's superficial judgment of these schools had some prophetic value. Primarily conceived to fill the needs created by the failure of public education to maintain standards under the pressure of the mass immigration of culturally neglected European stock, they soon began to represent instruments of a class differentiation absurd in its incongruous aping of British traditions. In an age during which education in all enlightened countries was being progressively emancipated from church control, they introduced Episcopalian, often High Church management. They borrowed from English school customs their most pernicious practices of fagging and hazing, while failing to take from their prototypes the excellently rigid educational program in mathematics and classical literature. Their underpaid teachers fell far below the scholastic standards established by Arnold and others in England, often combining such duties as the teaching of fundamentals with coaching of the baseball nine or the football team.

Though conceived at first for the training of sons of the established well-to-do bourgeoisie, their foundation fell into our period of Gargantuan commercial expansion, and they were soon overrun by the new plutocracy, a class never exceeded in history for its confidence in the power of money. With a magnificent opportunity to develop out of this vigorous and competent stock the rudiments of a true democratic aristocracy of learning, tolerance, and sense of public obligation, they succeeded only in encouraging class barriers based purely on economic standards, without any of the intellectual and spiritual differentiations which justify such distinctions. They made prac-

tically no contributions to American national education, either in method or in content.

That the original purposes of such schools can be successfully accomplished without the social and religious hocus-pocus has recently been demonstrated by a few exceptional institutions — notably Exeter — and even by a few public high schools in regions less subjected to immigrant pressure. To be just, it must be admitted that a slow transformation is now in progress. Under the influence of inside opinion, as the plutocracy — by several generations of substitution of cigarettes for chewing tobacco — is developing, if not into an aristocracy, at least into a liberal patrician group, these schools are undergoing changes; and with wisdom and weakening of the snob appeal, they may yet become important experiment stations for secondary education and point the way for public institutions less favorably situated. In my youth, however, they were in their worst reactionary phases, and I believe that my father's judgment was a wise one.

For one winter session, when my parents were traveling in Europe, I was sent to a *Fremdenschule* in Wiesbaden. This institution was organized particularly for the education of the sons of English families resident in Germany who wished to have their boys prepared for Oxford and Cambridge. The teaching, therefore, was sound, the instructors largely English university men of the typical Arnold tradition. What I remember most vividly of that school is my introduction to the British scholastic habit of physical chastisement. A bad recitation or an impertinent answer brought a prompt and vigorous box on the ear, and a cane was under the teacher's desk.

The first time this was applied to me, I fell into a hysterical rage, as did another American boy similarly treated. We were spared repetition, and it still remains a matter of amazement to me

that the British boys didn't seem to mind it. For this reason, or perhaps from a sense of national solidarity, it was on them that all the lickings were thereafter concentrated. They didn't even appear to feel humiliated, and, contrary to what would now be psychoanalytically predicted, these docilely supported beatings had no influence — certainly no immediately noticeable Rousseauian influence — on their characters. One of them, to whom I manifested contempt at a moment when the welts must still have been painful, gave me the worst fight of my quarrelsome boyhood — in which I came off very much second-best.

All that the canings seemed to do to these English lads was to make them amazingly resistant to pain in that part of the body where the back loses its honest name. It is not impossible that this habit, early inculcated in the British ruling classes, of knowing when they were licked, taking it with docility on the least vulnerable part of the body, yet remaining unhumiliated thereby and ready to rise when opportunities for resistance were more favorable, has had profound influence on English foreign policy. It is only lately that the umbrella has become symbolic of this attitude.

On our return to America my father, who had given the matter much study, decided to send me to a private school in New York in which he believed that the system of German secondary education was competently followed. It was run by a distinguished scholar and pedagogue, a German Jew, Julius Sachs.

Julius Sachs! Oh, the terror of him! Large and well-paunched, he had a head like the marble Jupiter that, weighing a hundred pounds or more, perches precariously on the high shelf over my head. Was he a Jew? The little I had no idea. He was the ruling spirit that presided over the house in 59th Street to which, every morning, I carried my little *Ranzen* (dogskin knapsack, with white and black spotted hair on the flap), filled

with Latin grammars and arithmetic books, getting into the door just as the bells clanged loudly to tell me I was a few minutes late.

From the time I woke up with the sun in my eyes until I entered the school-house doors each morning, my behavior was governed by the instinct to delay the evil hour. Washing and dressing were performed with a deliberate slowness not justified by a too meticulous attention to crevices of the ears and fingernails. There was a good deal of gazing out of the window; making the faucet squirt by holding the thumb over the spout; swimming paper boats in the bathtub; doing dumbbell exercises; or lunging at the doorknob with an old foil. Then, at breakfast, the oatmeal had to be made into an island surrounded by a sea of milk; the eggshell had to be tapped with the spoon to a tune before it could be picked off the top of the egg; the glass of milk, just mulattoed with a tinge of coffee to make it 'grown-up,' was carefully scrutinized and often refused by reason of a 'hex' — that is, a film of coagulated milk — which had to be fished out. Mother was patient and helpful. Father almost not — but too much amused to show irritation. At any rate, the little pea jacket adjusted, the flowing tie pulled into place, the *Ranzen* packed with books, a paper of sandwiches, and an apple, the journey to school was eventually begun, with a kiss and a shove out of the door.

It was amusing either to step on all the cracks between the pavement stones or — at other times — to jump over them. Puddles had to be leaped into, to make splashes. Encountered dogs were always of interest. My father, indulgent in these matters, had often said: 'If a boy and a dog meet in the street and neither of them pays any attention to the other, they are both a little queer.'

As the school was approached, other boys converged. It was of interest, and often of profit, to compare exercises and answers to problems. Finally, as the

fatal hour drew near, there was nothing to do but to enter, in a state of mind compounded of apprehension, loathing, and a certain amount of arrogant courage. Dr. Sachs, who knew his pupils, often called me 'Fabius Maximus Cunctator' — which shows the kind of man he was. Julius Sachs — Jew, German, schoolmaster, and noble scholar! I often think of him when I ponder this question of anti-Semitic violence that we had thought was settled in the Middle Ages — as we thought until 1914 so many other things, political and social, had been finally disposed of.

In his *Rabbi von Bacherach*, Heine lets Jäckel, the fool, say: 'It is an important business, for if Abraham had really slaughtered Isaac and not the billy goat, there would now be more billy goats and not so many Jews in the world.' Jews were an important influence in my education. It is a curious paradox in the history of the Teutonic race that, although there is an almost instinctive inclination to anti-Semitic prejudice in them, there is — on the other hand — no race upon which the influence of Jewish thought and genius has had a more profound effect.

My father once told me that in the 1840's, in a village along the Rhine, a boy had thrown a stone at a Jew. The missile did not hit the Jew but it broke a windowpane; and the Jew was made to pay for the damage, because, if he hadn't dodged, the pane would not have been broken — the playful brutality of healthy children maltreating a cat.

Yet, in this very setting, Jews were taking a more significant part in the moulding of national thoughts — political, literary, philosophical, and musical — than anywhere else in the civilized world. Heine, the lovable, detestable, arrogant, idealistic, materialistic, German-hating, German-loving exile, often expressed his nostalgic love for a fatherland which treated him badly — not because he was a Jew (he was baptized in

his youth, and professed himself a Christian), but because his patriotism was too intellectually dangerous. He felt and considered himself a German — witness his verses: —

*Und als ich die deutsche Sprache vernahm
Da wurd mir seltsam zu Mute.
Ich meinte nicht anders als ob das Herz
Recht angenehm verblute.*

*Seit ich auf deutsche Erde trat
Durchströmen mich Zauberkräfte.
Der Riese hat wieder die Mutter berührt
Und es wuchsen ihm neue Kräfte.*

In later days, I heard another exile — not a Jew, but an ex-Chancellor of the Reich — express the same belief in the essential soundness of the soul of a people temporarily subjugated by an hysterical ‘racialism’ born of political and economic fear. Germany, thou owest much of thy national soul to thy Jews, who — as in no other nation in the history of the world — have striven to become citizens of the Western world under thy reluctant wings! English Jews became lords and Chief Justices, French Jews became bankers and cabinet ministers, German Jews became Germans.

Julius Sachs and his staff were learned men, and most of the boys who went to the school were the children of cultivated German-Americans, Jewish or gentile, who — though race-conscious to a moderate degree — were not arrogantly so, certainly not sufficiently so to have it make any difference whatever. I mention this in order to testify to the fact that since my earliest youth I have seen much of Jews. And in later life I have had Jewish friends, pupils, and colleagues — some of whom I have respected and loved, others of whom I have detested, just as it has happened with other people.

Once, even, I was very fond of a Jewish girl. She was lovely, and she pinned a rose on my coat one night when we were beginning to look deeply into each other’s eyes. Then she didn’t let me see her again and, within six months, married one of her own race, now a judge.

She had a lot more brains and foresight than I had. She still has, and I hope she remembers me as affectionately as I do her.

Thus I have had every reason to keep a warm spot in my heart for the Jews, and I look with puzzled distress upon the subtle growth of anti-Semitic feeling in our own country. It frightens me, because infinitely more dangerous than the most serious imagined injury that could accrue to society from the Jews is the destructive injury we must inevitably inflict upon all that we cherish in the progress of the world by allowing intolerance and cruelty to determine our treatment of minorities. As Heine said, concerning this question: ‘Be entirely tolerant or not at all; follow the good path or the evil one. To stand at the cross-roads requires more strength than you possess.’

There is probably not an intelligent, kindly gentile today who is not puzzled and is not trying, if he is honest with himself, to probe his own prejudice; to ask himself: ‘Why?’ The day for a religious answer is long past. To understand it without religious implications usually leads to the trivial analysis of Jewish social and business habits, their ‘unethical’ competitive spirit, and their ‘egocentric determination to get ahead.’ By these traits, H. G. Wells believes, they step up the competitive tempo until it becomes uncomfortable for the rest of us. ‘You may repudiate . . . the Nazi methods,’ he continues, ‘but that does not close the Jewish problem for you.’ He sees the root of the evil in Jewish solidarity. ‘Why do they refuse to be men among men? . . . Come out of Israel!’ he cries.

But, we may ask, have they been allowed to ‘come out of Israel’?

Renan, who has given the matter the same deep thought that he gave to other things, says in his *L’Antichrist*: ‘*Ça ne peut être sans raison que ce pauvre Israël a passé sa vie de peuple à être massacré. Quand toutes les nations et tous les siècles*

vous ont persecuté, il faut bien qu'il y ait à cela quelque motif. Le juif jusqu'à notre temps s'insinuait partout en réclamant le droit commun; mais en réalité le juif n'était pas dans le droit commun; il gardait son statut particulier. . . . Il voulait les avantages des nations sans être une nation, sans participer aux charges des nations. Les nations sont des créations militaires . . . elles sont l'œuvre de paysans et de soldats; les juifs n'ont contribué en rien à les établir. Là est le grand mal-entendu impliqué dans les prétentions israélites.'

There was probably some truth in this when it was written. Since then — certainly in America and in France — the Jews have taken an energetic part in political and professional life, no better and no worse in effect than that of other groups, feeling and voting and working according to their social and economic positions rather than as Jews.

The points made by Renan seem to me to have lost strength in direct proportion to the degree in which the Jews have been allowed to 'come out of Israel.'

My friend L., far and away the most distinguished of my professional colleagues, himself a Jew, believes that the solution lies in an absorption of the Jew into the national life, which shall distribute Jewish participation into all layers of social and economic activity. Physical absorption will be an inevitable and less essential consequence. L. says, in agreement with Renan, that the differences between Jew and gentile — which he freely acknowledges as existing — are attributable to the fact that 'our race, unlike the English, German, and French, has for centuries lacked that backlog of a peasantry from which, annually, the over-commercialized and over-intellectualized urban populations are rejuvenated.'

To pretend that we do not discriminate against the Jews in this country is mere self-deception. Let us be honest. We discriminate in our colleges, in our

clubs, and in our hotels. And many quite commonplace people, when they associate intimately with Jews whom they admire, rarely fail to be conscious of their tolerance. As long as this prejudice exists, the problem is not solved — certainly not for the proud and sensitive Jew, the cultivated and high-minded Jew, whom we should accept on terms of absolute equality. Complete sympathetic friendship, without any sense of separateness, is something that has happened to most of us with individual Jewish friends, to prove — to me at least — that the so-called 'Jewish traits,' other than the physical, are not inherently racial, somatically hereditary, but conditioned by the treatment the Jews have received. The problem, instead of remaining insolubly racial or religious, has resolved itself into the not simple but soluble one of social adjustment. Here, as in France, if ever before in the world, combined efforts of Jews and gentiles might at last bring this wandering Israel to harbor.

When R. S. had arrived at this point, he seemed extremely well satisfied with himself. I could see that he felt rather noble, and believed he had made a distinct contribution.

'I take it, then,' I said, 'that you are having no difficulty in suppressing that insidious germ of anti-Semitism that occasionally invades your consciousness and of which you are so afraid.'

'I refuse,' he replied with some heat, 'I utterly refuse to allow myself to yield to any such illogical, inhumane, and pernicious prejudices. I believe with my best Jewish friend, Heine, that if the Jews disappeared from the world, and I found that somewhere there existed a surviving specimen of this people, I would travel hundreds of miles to examine him and to press his hands in reverence for the services his race has rendered.'

He was silent, and sat long in contemplation. I could see that he was thinking, with emotion, of his many Jewish

friends. Then, suddenly, with that characteristic and honest self-contradiction which made him so sympathetically amusing to me, he exclaimed: —

‘Oh, Joseph, Jacob, Abe, Milton, Sidney, Rebecca, Isidor, and Lydia! How I love and honor you! You have been my sisters and my brothers. How much I owe you in kindness and friendship! But why, oh why, have you such terrible uncles and cousins and aunts?’

‘Well,’ I thought ‘here is the problem in a nutshell.’

‘But the cousins-and-aunts question may eventually be solved, just as the Joseph, Jacob, and Rebecca one is now. Let’s not make ourselves unhappy about it. And at any rate, even these cousins and aunts can say, as old Börne did: “*Jésus-Christ? Je le dis en parenthèse — il était mon cousin.*”’

v

R. S. tells of college and the rising of the sap: —

Were I writing an autobiography, instead of this disconnected series of thoughts and impressions, I might describe the early years of my college course at Columbia, during which — largely because of the imbecile fraternity system which entangled me before I had learned my way about the buildings — I went far toward becoming an objectionable and ignorant young blighter. The group into which I was at first thrown were bawdy and idle; we worked as little as we dared; we drank and spent hours playing pool in the Buckingham Barroom. The only thing that saved me from worse pitfalls was the complete lack of sophistication with which I had come to college and which, though it exposed me to some ridicule and the occasional contempt of my ribald associates, saved me from crossing thresholds from which there is no complete spiritual returning. Before this could happen, I had the good fortune to attract the attention, by some verses I had sent to a college

paper, of a group of more mature students, among whom was Frederick P. Keppel. His friendship has been one of the great satisfactions of my life, but of the services his affection has done me that first one was the most far-reaching; for he drew me into the group of young enthusiasts who were at that time sitting at the feet of George Edward Woodberry.

Woodberry was at that time best known for his poetry. I say ‘at that time’ because, as I judge him now, I believe that his ultimate place — a high one in American letters — will eventually rest on his prose writings, his critical essays, and his *Taormina*, all of which combine distinction and color of style with great learning and a sensitiveness to beauty which mark him as a poet writing prose. Woodberry was of the tradition of Shelley, Wordsworth, and Coleridge. His mind was deeply saturated with European culture and the art of Greece and of Italy. But he added to this, especially in his later verse, a purely American note — an enthusiasm for the equality of men, optimism for the realization of the ideal life by the evolution of American democracy. He was an intensely American poet, without trying to break away by studied eccentricities of style or content from the continuous stream of the European traditions which inspired him and which, flowing through his spirit, gathered the emotion and the inspiration of his Americanism. If his poetry is not as great as it might be, it is perhaps because of a certain sentimentality and emotional lushness which sprang from an inherent softness in his character, but which I did not recognize until much later. But there are passages in the *North Shore Watch* (for which James Russell Lowell called him the American Shelley), in the *Roamer*, and in a few lyrics and sonnets, which will again be read and loved when the present vogue for incomprehensibility and brutality in verse has run the course of other decadent periods.

Philosophically, Woodberry was a Platonist. He was deeply influenced by Greek idealism, not only in the sense in which Plato 'ascribed the highest form of existence to ideals and abstractions,' conceptions of beauty, truth, and love; but in the artistic sense as well — the idealism which, as Professor Waldstein discovered, manifests itself by the representation of the ideal type rather than the particular portrait. Woodberry's own work was conceived in this spirit, but he fell short, it seems to me now, as Gilbert Murray falls short, by too much ornamentation, by too emotionally softening the austere Greek standards, as though — as a learned lady has said — one planted rambler roses round the Parthenon, obscuring the cold magnificence of its lines.

Whatever may be the eventual position of Woodberry in American letters — an estimate which I am not competent to make — he was unquestionably one of the greatest teachers this country has seen, inspiring with his own passionate sincerity and sensitive perceptions a large and diverse group of young men, few of whom, whatever their subsequent occupations, ever lost entirely the imprint of his personality. His life turned out to be a deeply tragic one, and the last time I saw him (I took my young son to call on him) he was sitting in the little ancestral farmhouse at Beverly, isolated from the world, a poor and very sad old man. I reflected upon how much I owed him — how the whole course of my life and thoughts had been lighted by the sparks from his spirit, and how I was only one of fifty and more for whom he had done the same thing. I tried to tell him this, and I like to think that it made him happier to hear it acknowledged with grateful affection.

The one thing his teaching needed to make it still more effective was a contemporary Irving Babbitt to counterbalance him, to give us hardness of soul to discipline the emotions Woodberry aroused in us. For his influence, good as

it was, left me, at least, with vague yearnings for æsthetic abstractions, with almost a disdain for the discipline of reason, trusting for guidance — as his beloved Shelley recommends in *The Defence of Poetry* — in the adequacy of emotions nobly exercised. This state of mind, a sort of *Weltschmerz*, a romantic being-in-love with the 'ideal' as Woodberry presented it, had incalculable moral value at the time. It was built, however, on a foundation of feelings and dreams, enthusiasms and exaltations. As far as we thought about religion at all, we were attracted to the mysterious, the miraculous, and the poetry of Christian thought, without being able to accept supernatural authority. We were in the position, attributed (I think wrongly) by some satirist (I think it was Durant) to Santayana, of believing that 'there is no God and the Virgin Mary is His Mother.' Yet, though it was a period of intellectual confusion, it was a happy one, and it created for many of us a mental atmosphere of æsthetic values that followed us through life and helped us over many hard places where reason failed.

The destinies of man are guided by the most extraordinary accidents. In my sophomore year, while in the Woodberrian poetic exaltation, and feeling much of the time like a young Shelley, I threw a snowball across the campus at a professor emerging from the Natural Science Building. It was a prodigious shot, a good hundred yards, I think. I hit him in the ear, knocked his hat off, and had time to disappear around the corner. I had nothing against him. It was an impulse, and a happy one, because I became guiltily conscious of him, thereafter, and eventually I took one of his courses as a sort of apologetic gesture. He happened to be both an anthropologist of note and a philosopher, and it was he who awakened in me the realization of the philosophical implications of scientific fact. There were great teachers of science at Columbia in those days, and

the junior year — largely owing to the inspiration of the man whom I had hit in the ear — found me, without cutting loose entirely from the Department of Comparative Literature, feeling as though I had suddenly entered a new world of wonders and revelations, under the reign of Edmund B. Wilson and Bashford Dean.

These men and their assistants, Calkins, Strong, and McGregor, were direct spiritual offspring of the magnificent group of biologists that followed in the wake of the Darwinian period. They had known Haeckel and Huxley. Weismann, Dohrn, the Hertwigs, and Tyndall became our household gods. Wilson and Dean, and to a lesser degree Osborn, were a new experience in professors. They were highly trained specialists, but their minds swept the horizon. And though they stood in the first rank of scientific accomplishment, they were cultivated gentlemen and had time for their elementary students — a combination that one must search for to-day with the lantern of Diogenes. Their laboratories became my home, and even more than the courses themselves I remember the afternoons of puttering, when Dean or his faithful McGregor puttered with us and, with that greatest art of the gifted teacher, made us feel like younger colleagues rather than raw students. To be sure, I did not fail here as elsewhere to get into trouble — notably on the day when, for the benefit of a pedantic fellow student whom I did not like, I pretended I had caught hydrophobia from a dog brain, and started to bark and bite this colleague — now hysterical — in the leg. But the astute Oliver Strong, who came on the scene just as my victim, trying to escape, had upset an incubator, instead of disciplining me academically had other students hold me down and poured a bucket of sea urchins down my neck. But, apart from interludes of this type, my career in this department became as deeply satisfying and stimulating as that under Woodberry.

My college education, to make a long story short, then consisted of Woodberry, Wilson, and Dean — thus again affirming the truism that one is trained by men and not by curricula. The remark about the superb educational value of sitting on a log with Mark Hopkins on the other end of it is quite correct in principle — though from what I have read of that gentleman's philosophical views and information, I should have picked someone else for my log.

During my third year at college came the sinking of the *Maine* and the Spanish War. It affected Americans in many different ways. There was no great excitement except among those who were by temperament jingoes, and a large proportion of the conservative population considered the war unjustified and imperialistic. By some of the group with which I was associated at Columbia the war was dismissed as an episode of little importance, while others rushed to join the militia or the naval reserve. As for me, I had no philosophical views whatever about the justice or injustice of declaring war on Spain, but I was carried away by the prospects of being a soldier for no reason more sensible than a craving for excitement. After much argument with my father, who took the position that the trouble would be over before I had learned to stand at attention, I finally persuaded him to sign his consent to my enlistment papers to the local cavalry unit, Squadron A. I could ride and I could shoot, but I had no idea whatever of the meaning of military discipline. I was very proud in my uniform, although — being slight and small for my age, though tough and hard — my sabre came almost to my collarbone. I did get an enormous thrill out of riding forward to face the enlistment officer from Washington and taking the oath of allegiance.

All that summer I drilled. One troop of the Squadron had already left for Chickamauga, and the rest of us were

waiting in the hope that we might be sent as replacements, since the boys of the original troop were coming down like flies with typhoid fever. The most notable fact of our Spanish War was the unbelievably miserable sanitary supervision of the camps and the consequent enormous incidence of enteric fevers. It was during this time, it was said, that a high official of the War Department, not a professional man, came to inspect one of these camps and — shown the water supply — filled a glass, held it up to the light, and said: 'This water looks all right to me.' It was also during this time that Victor Vaughan and his colleagues of the Army Medical Corps discovered the immense importance of flies in the transmission of typhoid bacilli from open latrines to food. It is interesting to remember that the great Belisarius, who was perhaps, apart from being a notable strategist, one of the earliest commanders of troops to realize the importance of sanitation, knew about this fly business, or — according to Procopius — suspected it sufficiently to include it in his precautions.

I never got to the front, and at about the time when our first troop landed in Puerto Rico and we were daily expecting orders to join them, the war ended and my father was grateful in a manner that I did not fully appreciate until my own son was seventeen years old and war was swinging by a thread like a sword of Damocles over the head of an anxious world.

I stayed in the Squadron after the war and proudly became one of the body-guard of Theodore Roosevelt when he was inducted into the governorship of New York. I was still a private, having been demoted from the eminent position of Troop Bugler, which had appealed to me because I could ride behind the captain on a white horse and transmit his commands by a variety of raucous blasts. I did fairly well in the Armory, but unfortunately just before the Dewey parade, in which I had imagined myself

prancing proudly down Fifth Avenue in front of our cavalcade, I blasted a number of sour notes at a drill. The captain, a kindly man, ordered me to his dressing room after dismissal and asked me to blow an intricate series of commands as he directed. The result was that he said: 'If you could blow as well as you can ride, we might have a successful parade; but as things are, half the troop will be charging while the rest will be doing a left turn.'

Instead, therefore, of proudly bugling my squadron through the parade, I was told off to a detail consisting of a sergeant and twelve privates who were to escort Theodore Roosevelt from his residence to his place in the parade. This was my first close view of the man who later became one of my chief admirations and whom I came to know just before the beginning of the World War, when he discussed the 'hyphenated Americans' problem with me and booked me as Sanitary Inspector of the division that was never to be organized. This first meeting, however, gave me the most characteristic view of him that I was ever to have. We rode to his house, leading with us a spare horse carrying a brand-new yellow Western stock saddle and a bridle wonderfully embossed with silver studding. We dismounted and I held Mr. Roosevelt's horse beside my own.

We waited about ten minutes, and while we were drawn up at attention in rigid military form the sergeant was beginning to worry about how he could find our proper place in the parade. Suddenly the front door opened, Mr. Roosevelt appeared in a frock coat and a high hat, rushed down the high stoop straight to the horse I was holding, mounted, and, tearing the bridle out of my hand, was off at a clatter down the street toward Fifth Avenue and around the corner before we could mount and follow. He found his own place, and we never caught up with him again. But that was the sergeant's worry.

My fellow privates in the Squadron were all members of well-to-do families and almost entirely college men. There came a time, after two years of service in this unit, when — going through that period of socialistic and radical emotion which comes to many young men — I had myself transferred to what I thought was the toughest outfit in New York. I wanted to get intimately acquainted with the underprivileged — and I did. It was my first experience of the depths to which coarseness, vulgarity, and smut can attain.

Being a medical student at this time, I had a venereal clinic in the lavatory after every drill and learned a vocabulary which prepared me for later experiences with shepherders in the Rockies, and with fishermen on the Banks. I was too inexperienced at the time to realize that language is a matter of habit and that the bestial implications of the words used had little bearing on the characters of the men of this class who used them as clichés. Wishing to be a thorough democrat, I attended the dances and picnics which were the social life of my new companions and found — another lesson of sociology learned — that the mothers, wives, and sisters of these men were about ten tiers above them in decency and gentleness.

My final performance in this military unit was not to my credit. We were reviewed by the Governor, who passed our parked battery in a victoria with a stovepipe hat held above his head. The arrangement was that after he had passed each gun by about a hundred yards the lanyard was to be pulled and his progress thus marked by a series of cannon shots, going off at regular intervals, firing far in his rear. When he came opposite the gun of which I was the cannoneer, I was overcome by one of those impulses half compounded of nervousness and of a perverted sense of humor. I pulled my lanyard, and the blast of black powder burst under the nearest horse's belly. The last I saw of the

Governor was a cloud of dust and a heavily rocking carriage. The things that our very fat major said to me exceeded in force and in imagination anything I ever heard from a quartermaster. I should have been court-martialed, but my enlistment was up anyway.

I got out of the army with much pleasure, little knowing that I was to spend almost two full years in it later on.

At the end of my third year at college the treasures unlocked for me by Woodberry and by my teachers of science made the world seem a happy and a rich land for exploration. My head was full of moonshine and hope, and I was ready for adventure. I took a job for Professor Osborn, to help dig for fossils on the western edge of the Staked Plain. The books I had with me in my bag testify to the incongruous jumble of badly insulated ideas that were joggling through my head: I had a *Golden Treasury*, a copy of Dana's *Geology*, and a Bible — which I had made up my mind to read through, from one end to the other. The Bible furnished me not only some instruction, but a great deal of amusement. I recall particularly a story in Genesis about the Jews, when they were at war with a tribe they failed to conquer in open battle. So they sent their priests among their enemies, to convert them with all the rites that go with conversions to Judaism. And then it said, 'On the third day, when they were sore,' they descended upon them. This, and similar stories, have made the Old Testament as dear to me as Rabelais's five books.

But in spite of the ribald pleasure I had from the lusty history of the ancient Jews, I soon found myself — with no lighter literature to turn to — captivated by the magnificent cadences of the language and the *maestoso* of the poetry of the Psalms. The Bible alone was worth the trip, for I might never have read it, as I did then, against the background of the majestic desolation

of the desert and under conditions of physical frugality which have always brought out the best there is in me.

My boss was Collins, a Protohippus expert and a worthy citizen, with some learning, a great enthusiasm, and a long Western experience which had made him a genius at finding his way in mountains and in desert, without being able to tell anyone else how he did it. I was quite the opposite, and usually when I rode out of sight of camp it took me all day to get back. Sometimes they had to look for me.

The other member of our three-man expedition was a cowpuncher by the name of Chipman, the son of a rancher who lived near Clarendon, fifteen miles from the single-track railroad that ran north and south through the panhandle.

We got along together pretty well, largely because Collins was an extraordinarily patient individual, and the cowboy was a little crazy, — possibly from long stretches of lonesomeness, — with a lunacy that expressed itself by long silences, sometimes lasting all day, and complete oblivion of his surroundings.

We had a team, which he drove, and some saddle horses. The cowboy would sit on the box of the truck that carried our outfits hours on end, driving through the hot desert, brooding most of the time; but occasionally, remembering some dance he had attended, he would hang the lines over the brake bar, take out a jew's-harp, and play. All by himself, he would impersonate a Western dance. He would play a snatch on the jew's-harp; then shout commands to the dancers: 'Swing your partners!' or 'All form a circle!'; then dance with his heavy boots against the dashboard, while he took up the jew's-harp again.

Meanwhile Collins, who rode behind, would sing to himself — usually hymns, or, rather, the same hymn over and over again. His favorite was: —

Are your garments spotless?
Are they white as snow?
Are they washed in the blood of the Lamb?

He would sing it once, then hawk and spit, and sing it over again.

This sort of thing, going on hour after hour, together with the heat, the long stretches of wide desert, with here and there a few mesquite bushes or some yucca plants, would get on my nerves; and I would ride way off on the horizon, where I could just keep the general direction. When I stayed near the others, or when we made camp and cooked our food, the little habits — like Collins's hawking or the expression on the cowpuncher's face — would make me nasty; and that I wasn't murdered on the expedition is very largely because Collins was at heart a very kind man, and the cowpuncher most of the time didn't understand what I was driving at.

We were out three months. My job was taking care of the horses, and at night hobbling one of them and letting the others run before I turned into my blankets under the open sky. In the morning I unhobbled the captive horse and drove in the others. On these rides I would often run into a herd of antelope and tire my horse for the day, racing after them. I also helped to search for signs of fossils when we reached the escarpment, and to dig with a pick and shovel when we located something. We did get a Protohippus tooth, besides some mastodon heads, and camel and turtle bones. And so, from the point of view of the Museum, the undertaking was a success. Meanwhile, I learned a good deal of geology, read my Bible, and grew tough, brown, and thin as a leather strap.

Before we started into the desert, Collins left me with the horses at a ranch near the Oklahoma border — then Indian Territory — while he made a ten days' trip to look at some reported fossil pits north of us. During that time I had nothing to do but see that the horses were grazed and watered, go out with my shotgun for prairie chickens, and hunt jack rabbits on some of the rancher's horses.

Jack-rabbit coursing was better fun than anything else I have ever done, except drag hunting. There was a herd of tough young Western horses from which I could choose, and the rancher's son and I would go out with a couple of mongrel greyhounds to start the rabbits. Then we would gallop hell-bent for leather across the prairie. There was nothing to look out for except gopher holes and mesquite bushes. The rabbits would run at an incredible speed, and whenever the hounds got near them would double off at an angle, the dogs shooting way ahead on the wrong course. It was at this point that the rider was useful, standing up in the stirrups and changing direction until the hounds caught up again. It was exciting — and so joyful that I shouted at the top of my lungs while I was riding.

On these rides, the rancher's daughter would often join us. She was a nice young girl of about seventeen, and her name was Mary. Mary had a hard life. The ranch buildings consisted of a dugout, which was both living room and kitchen for the rancher, his wife, the son and daughter mentioned, and an unbelievably dirty six-year-old boy, whose nose was always running. The older brother, a boy of nineteen, slept in an old wagon bed about a hundred yards from the house, and Mary slept in a lean-to next to the chicken coop. I made myself at home under a mesquite bush on the hill above the dugout.

The only available literature for this family was a Sears, Roebuck catalogue, which was happily thumbed in contemplation of imaginary purchases, few of them ever achieved.

Mary worked very hard, helping her mother, tending the vegetable garden, feeding the chickens, boiling food for the pigs, patching overalls, darning socks, and doing any other chores that were to be done; while her father was out mending fences, and her mother was usually sleeping in the sun. Mary had never had any companionship or fun, and what

seemed incredible to her, apparently, was the fact that I was respectful, and carried her saddle for her, saddled her horse when we went out after jack rabbits, or showed her any little courtesy that was perfectly natural and unexaggerated, but of which she had evidently had no experience whatever. She was being courted, nevertheless, because on Sunday a couple of young cowboys came riding in, turned out their horses, and prepared to stay for the day.

The entertainment consisted of sitting in a circle in the dugout — the whole family, the two boys, and I — for the most part in utter silence. Every now and then, one of the visitors would get up and perform a feat of strength. One of them chinned himself on the door with one hand. Then the other got up and leant over backwards, until the top of his head touched his heels. There were various exhibitions like this, and between tricks there would be occasional and widely separated remarks, chiefly dealing with cattle, hogs, grain, and horses. At night, after a tremendous meal of corn, cabbage, and pork, the cowboys caught their horses and rode off.

I spent ten days on the ranch, riding with Mary whenever there were no chores to be done, and telling her about New York. She was thirsty for news of the big places, and I am quite sure that half the true things I told her she didn't believe, while she took as gospel some of my wildest cock-and-bull stories. When finally our expedition left, and we were riding away, Mary sat by the chicken-coop door, weeping bitterly. I wrote a very bad sonnet about her.

VI

R.S. and women: '*Cras amet qui nunquam amavit, quique amavit cras amat.*'

The psychoanalytical method of writing biography has, in recent literature, been very much overdone. Yet it is unlikely that any revealing portrait of a

human being has ever been written without a good deal of psychological insight. Even Plutarch draws his characters against the background of the events and mores of their periods and, in this sense, is quite modern. For at all times character has been shaped by the impact of society and events, personal and public relations, on the individual. There is possibly no modern biography which is more thoroughly infiltrated with psychological interpretation than Plutarch's account of the Antony-Cleopatra episode, though it is quite apparent that the psychological approach, in this case, is not a skillful one. And how could anyone write the merest sketch of the life of Sappho — who adored her little hetæra, but leaped to her death from the cliffs of Leucadia for love of Phaon, the fisherman — without Freudian implications?

However, in the older literature the subconscious and the sexual influences were either neglected or developed with crude ignorance of true motivations. Today, as Fuller — a genial critic of philosophy — says, the Freudian ideas have worked a profound revolution. And 'it may well be that the psychologist of the future will be as little able to ignore or to reject them as the astronomer of today is able to pass by Galileo and return to Ptolemy, or the contemporary biologist to flout the doctrine of evolution,' and so on. If, as he believes, the psychoanalytic psychology has come to stay, as heliocentric astronomy and Darwinism apparently have, 'it has administered a blow to human self-importance and pretensions [pride in one's so-called individual personality, he implies] far more severe than that dealt by man's loss of his central position in the sidereal universe and his discovery of his animal ancestry.' Thus Fuller. And even if he is only partly right, it would be a gross omission to attempt to paint a balanced portrait of R. S. without some reference to his relationship to women and his amorous constitution.

One need not, however, take upon oneself — as so many biographers have attempted to do — any analytical interpretation of one's subject. This is a technical task for the professionally trained, who may take the conscientiously recorded facts and analyze them with the experienced insight which they alone possess.

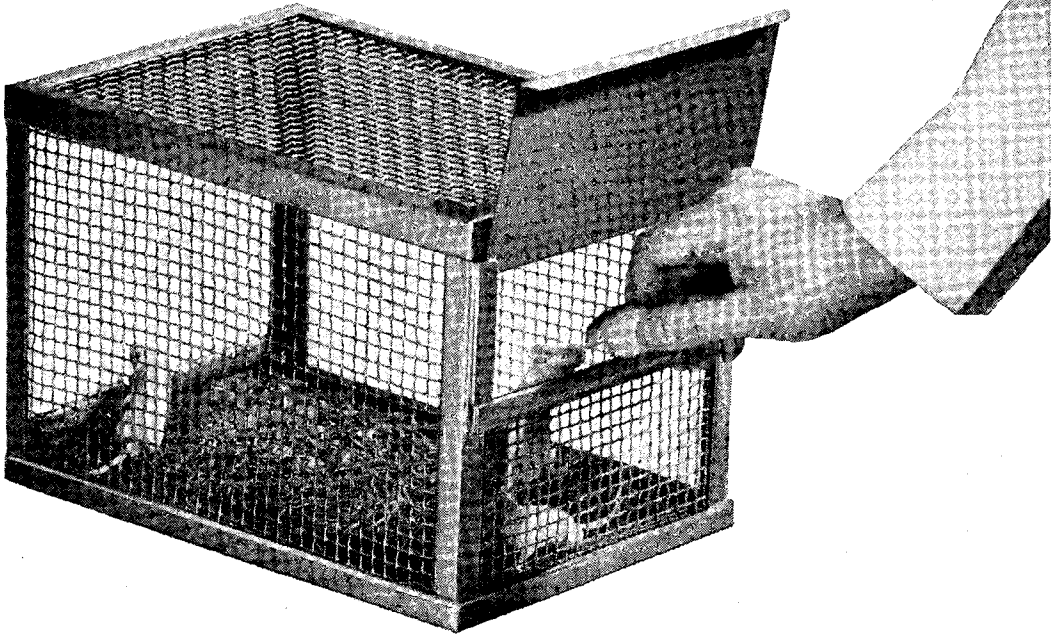
In taking up this side of the character of R. S. I abstain therefore from any pretensions to psychological wisdom, and set down without comment what I could find out about his emotional life. The reader can draw any conclusions he may be able or inclined to draw. Our friend may be 'analyzable' from these data, even as Hamlet and Lady Macbeth have been analyzed — though with more difficulty, since, being a real person and not the creature of a miraculous imagination, he is far less consistent.

However, even this simple recording was not a simple matter, because of R. S.'s dread of psychoanalysis. In part, this dread was due to his fundamental belief in the soundness of Professor Freud's methods, and that, if applied to him, the system might reveal a number of things which, all his life, he had endeavored to conceal. More directly, his apprehension was rooted in a period of intimate association with one of the most accomplished psychiatrists of his time, the distinguished Dr. Trout.

As far as I could gather, the circumstances were somewhat as follows: —

On the transport, returning after nearly two years of foreign service in France, R. S., being one of the ranking medical officers on board, was assigned to share a stateroom with Dr. Trout, who had been an important psychiatrist of the A.E.F. When R. S. found his way to the cabin, he discovered that the naval surgeon in charge of assigning quarters, who was an old acquaintance, had exercised that peculiar sense of humor that is often the result of being too long at sea or herding sheep in the desert, and had lodged Dr. Trout and

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R.S. in the space reserved for the care of commissioned officers who were recognizably — that is, more than usually — deranged. As a natural complement to this distinguished joke, the naval surgeon had whispered into a number of ears that R.S. had been assigned to this cabin in Dr. Trout's charge because he had shown signs of mental eccentricity.

Of course the rumor spread from the mastheads, and it was said that R.S. had been deprived of his razor and that Dr. Trout was to devote most of his time to supervision. The consequence was that throughout the voyage the officers of the New York Division, many of whom had been fellow troopers of R.S. in the New York Cavalry Squadron, treated him with a degree of consideration and gentle solicitude quite foreign to their ordinary robust habits of association and quite incomprehensible to R.S., who had no idea of the reasons for their unnatural behavior.

Dr. Trout was a tall, albino-blond gentleman, with watery blue eyes and a drooping moustache, who was generally dreaded throughout official circles because no one could ever be sure whether personal attentions from this otherwise agreeable companion, or even the most casual conversation, might not be — as they say in the Army — in line of duty. Indeed, it was said about him that he had once been invited to a dinner at Headquarters with instructions to make careful observation of a certain colonel who was to be placed next to him at the table, and to appraise him from a psychiatric point of view. Dr. Trout is said to have made a report to the effect that the colonel was a pronounced manic-depressive. But unfortunately, since Trout sat between two colonels, his report was made about the one on the left instead of the suspected one on his right. What was finally done about this I never heard.

Colonel Trout had himself the reputation of a well-developed sense of humor.

It was he who told the story of a field clerk who, having copied a letter in which the word 'psyche' was used, remarked: 'Ain't that the hell of a way to spell fish!' When, at a later date, the Colonel accepted the Professorship of Psychiatry in a well-known medical school, before an organized psychiatric clinic was available, he said that this didn't bother him because he could occupy his time studying the faculty. Asked whether his constant association with the mentally deranged did not depress him dreadfully, he replied that he far preferred the company of the feeble-minded, because they were as a rule far more docile and honest than the so-called 'normal' people he knew — and he meant it.

Like many others of his branch of the medical profession, Colonel Trout had acquired the habit of always being on the job. You could never be sure when speaking with him whether you were being conversed with or led into the betrayal of some hidden abyss, some iniquitous collection of psychic evil that you had succeeded hitherto in concealing in the underbrush of the unconscious, and which the slow development of character was gradually managing to encapsulate just as fibrous connective tissue imprisons a tuberculous lesion. There were certain Freudian ground rules in this game with which only the psychiatrists were thoroughly familiar, but of which the victims were so ignorant that, even on their guard, they could never be sure that they might not be caught in some revealing offside play. Few were aware, in the innocence of their ignorant hearts, of the fact that an unguarded reference to a lead pencil, or a church steeple, a barn door, a pitchfork, or a doughnut might immediately strike the psychiatrist's nose and set him baying on the malodorous trail of a psychic stench.

At a period slightly later than that during which R.S. lived in close communion with Dr. Trout, the development

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of endocrinology expanded the study of mental characteristics from concentration upon a single set of glands to include at least several, and the guilty feeling which oppressed all nervous sufferers was to some extent relieved by the hope that one of the other glands might be at fault. The time of which we speak, however, still fell into the later years of what might be spoken of as the 'uniglandular' psychiatry, and such expressions as 'libido,' 'phallus,' 'Œdipus complex,' 'paternal fixation,' and 'inversion' had crept out of their hiding places in the medical dictionaries and had entered the drawing-room. To dream at all in those days was a misfortune; to mention it, indecent; and to reveal the substance, reckless. One of my friends at this time became a veronal addict because he could not overcome his taste for Welsh rabbits after the theatre; and a dear old lady on Beacon Street jumped into the Charles River Basin because she repeatedly dreamt of the Bunker Hill Monument.

The joke about being confined with Dr. Trout in the cabin which had a grid over the door soon wore off; but night after night R. S. lay in the upper berth in the evenings while the doctor was receiving visits from officers of the New York Division, many of whom had been boyhood friends from the region in central New York which had been his home. None of them came for professional advice. All of them were very fond of Trout and he, obviously, of them. But all conversations, most innocently begun, gradually turned into a sort of analysis of the visitors. After the usual questions and answers concerning past experiences and relatives, Trout's professional instinct came to the surface — quite amiably and without evil intention, of course, but guided by spontaneous interest in the mental development of his visitor.

Some such question would be asked as: 'What became of the redheaded girl who lived over the post office?' or

'Who was the man your aunt married after your uncle died?' and so forth; and within ten or fifteen minutes the visitor's character began to be revealed. Even R. S., entirely unskilled in this technique, would gradually feel that he knew a great deal about these people, and sometimes — when one of them left — he had the slight sensation of shame that comes with eavesdropping.

It was this that made R. S. permanently shy of psychiatrists and of anything that might involve the risk of revealing his sexual reactions. I was never able to get him to talk at all about any of the women who had really influenced his life, but I did succeed in stimulating him to reminiscences which, in their totality, — though none of them were of any serious significance, — may reveal to some extent the manner of man he was in his relations to the other sex. These I have recorded as nearly as possible in his own words and in a chronological sequence of my own arrangement, since they were gathered over the course of years, whenever I could guide the conversation into these channels: —

The first girl I ever noticed in what, later, I recognized as a sentimental emotion was called Mamie. She was the daughter of a truck driver in my father's chemical factory. We used to play in the large factory yard, where hundreds of barrels of resin were stored on end, and it was great fun to jump from barrel top to barrel top. Mamie had a brother who became a bosom friend, and games of tag on the barrels were organized in which Mamie — being several years younger — was patronizingly allowed to participate. She and her brother were sweet children, amiable and gentle, and I loved them both very dearly. Their lives were hard. At twelve and ten, respectively, they were called upon for severe domestic service, and their poor mother, — a stout, red-faced woman, — kind enough when she was sober, was less so when drunk. Their happy moments were the

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ones they spent with me, playing on the barrels; but when I went back to my playroom to have my feet dried and to be fed my supper they went back to a little frame house where dirt, noise, unmerited abuse, and frugal tolerance were their lot.

Mamie was blue-eyed and blonde, with a bright bloneness that shone through the dirt on her face and the squalor of her clothes. And how humbly grateful she was to be allowed to be 'It,' chasing us over the barrels. There must have been a faint dawning of the endocrines in me even then, baneful prophecy of a long life of struggle, for while I was sorry for Jimmy when I happened to think of being so, there was always a protective tenderness in my heart for Mamie.

One day — it was drizzling — the wet drove us from our playground into a little shed where carboys of sulphuric acid were stored. I dug a nickel out of my pocket and Jimmy was dispatched to the store on the corner to buy some barber-pole candy sticks. Mamie and I sat close together, for we were damp and a little chilly. She stuck up her wet face to be kissed, and I looked down at her with the warm intention of kissing her. But when I looked into her face I saw two little rivulets running from Mamie's nose to her pouted upper lip. I had never noticed them before, although I had often observed her sticking her tongue out and upward, whenever she sniffed — for ours was a catarrhal climate. Now I looked and saw. But I have always been proud in later days that, even at this early age, I mastered my repulsion and kissed Mamie on her salty lips. Dear Mamie! What has become of you since? You were a lovely child, in spite of the rivulets on your upper lip, and — no doubt — you deserved more consideration than the world has given you. What happened to me at that moment has never left me since and is perhaps the only achievement that may eventually entitle me to some measure of self-appro-

bation — namely, the mastery of arrogance and disgust by tenderness and pity.

We played in the great court of my father's chemical factory and the atmosphere was redolent with odors of resin, sulphuric acid, and amyl acetate. I never pass a chemical factory or smell amyl acetate without thinking of Mamie and our games on the barrels. Yes, the sense of smell is the most nostalgic of our senses. I recall a charming lady from the West who stayed with us in New York, but left suddenly — long before she had intended to. She was in the recently cleaned bathroom one morning and, smelling the household ammonia, got so homesick for her twins that she couldn't stand it and had to go home.

It is strange that after all these years I should remember their names. They were called Galeoti, and came from Florence; and the name of the English governess was Miss Satterthwaite. For a month, in the late spring, we played together, the two little girls and I, in the garden of the hotel at Pegli, on the Italian Riviera. Everything was bursting into flower, and the garden had bushes blazing with white and red; there were gravel walks, and a fountain with a spout in the middle, and goldfish which were fed conscientiously every morning by the fat proprietress. We skipped and laughed in the garden, for the little Galeoti girls — one of them my age, the other two years younger, which would make her ten — were merry and great chatterboxes in a mixture of Italian and English that was frequently corrected by the governess. We took long walks together into the hills, and came home with great bunches of violets.

Late in the afternoon, Miss Satterthwaite often read to us. Among other things, she read an English translation of De Amicis. She was only a child herself, about seventeen, I should judge, and pretty as blonde, high-colored British girls so often are at



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that age. To me she seemed a young goddess. I sat very quiet when she read, and followed her about like a little dog. She was very lonely — probably it was the first time she had been away from home and isolated, as a young English governess would be in an Italian family. The parents Galeoti were away most of the time on excursions and at night played cards with my father and mother and other people in the hotel, drinking large quantities of *Asti spumante* and having very jolly times, as we children could hear after we had gone to bed.

I slept in a room that faced the garden, and the warm fragrance from many flowers and shrubs came into my window. I used to pretend that I was going to bed outside, among the bushes. One night I remember I could not sleep because the moon was white in the window; and, feeling restless and adventurous, I tiptoed through the hall and crept out into the garden. There, on a bench, Miss Satterthwaite was sitting, and when I slipped up beside her I saw that she was weeping. I was very sorry for her, but she took my hand between hers and told me that it was only the moonlight, that she had felt lonesome and was weeping only because it was so terribly beautiful. And suddenly she said, 'Hush!' and I heard my first nightingale. But it was a great disappointment. I was thinking of Miss Satterthwaite and the terrible grief I thought she was enduring when she led me to the door and told me to be a good boy and go to bed.

Of course I have been more or less in love all my life. But in the golden, adolescent days I fell in and out much faster than I did later. A look, a touch of the hand, a word, or — as in one case — only the sound of a snatch of song heard through a window on a summer night, and I was off on the new, sometimes before I was out of the old. Even this was not embarrassing, because the ladies in question had been fallen in love

with, adored in half a dozen execrable sonnets, taken on honeymoons to Spanish castles that I kept always ready and fully equipped for such purposes, and dropped again for a new love before they themselves had become aware that they were participating in a romantic adventure. I used them, so to speak, as lay figures for my sentimental education. It did me a lot of good, and them no harm.

There was Marie-Louise, the New York society girl, ten years older than I, indeed approaching thirty, an accomplished musician with a magnificent, almost Wagnerian soprano, but a figure pathologically — that is, incapacitatingly — fat. She would have made four of me, and she thought I was 'a nice boy but a little funny.'

There was Maud, the harness maker's daughter, a young Diana, but always suspecting melodramatic perils to her virtue from the rich man's son.

There was the Smith girl, who really had no particular attractions except that she lived in a hotel across the lake and tempted my Hero and Leander complex by sitting out on the wharf with a lantern at night, knowing that I would swim across a half mile of cold, black, starlit water just because of the stage setting. I might have been drowned half a dozen times, and no one the wiser till the next day; and when I did arrive and sat dripping and cold on the dock, we had nothing to say to each other — she because she was a stupid little doll, and I because I was blown. Yet even she served a purpose, and I used to swim home and climb up the hill through the woods, half-frozen but feeling elatedly heroic and devoted.

There was — but why catalogue them? They were all appropriate in their individual ways, and played passive, usually unconscious rôles in my development. Unlike François Villon, I know more or less what became of them — poor things. Not one turned out to be a princess, and those I've seen within the last ten years had turned out just as one would have

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expected — quite commonplace, with no signs whatever of having lived for a time in a cloud-swept castle somewhere between Barcelona and Bourg Madame.

In all this there was — I should say, in my own justification — a minimum of the physical. In defense of romanticism, which in so many of its aspects appears silly and affected, one should not underestimate the service it does, at a certain age, in sublimating into its lovely hocus-pocus what might otherwise — and, in its absence, often does — become a gross or careless attitude toward physical love. The romanticism which had me in its grip at that age was associated with hard riding, frugal living, — as far as food and drink were concerned, — and intellectual intoxication, under George Woodberry's influence, with the English romantic poets and their idealization of love. The cult of physical hardness helped considerably in keeping this state of mind from becoming, as it might so easily have done, a morbid one; for by instinct I knew the wisdom of Guarnerius's prescription for love-melancholy: 'To go with haircloth, etc., as monks do, but above all to fast.'

Also, the ladies as a rule were far from sentimental themselves. One of them, now the mother of four and the still attractive grandmother of two or three, — Ella, — how lovely, but, withal, how sensible she was! She was the daughter of the principal of a well-known boys' boarding school, and had an apartment of her own, on the corner of the big barracklike school building, high above the road. I used to serenade her at night, riding under her window on my big gray horse, Harry, and singing softly to the twang of a lute — with many a sour chord, for Harry was young and lively. The first time, Ella came to the window for a moment in a lovely pink night-gown. The second time, she didn't come to the window at all. She pretended to be asleep, and didn't mention my visit the next day. The third time, just as I was really finding my voice, the window

above her own was thrown open and a bucket of cold soapsuds came smack down on my horse's head. For a mile I just hung on, trying not to drop the lute. I was halfway to Shruboak before I had the horse under control. Ella didn't mention this the next day, either. The boy who threw the water was, I believe, the one whom she married a few years later. I trust she had little comfort of him. He had a depraved sense of humor.

There was a chestnut girl, who lived over the grocery store in the village. In those days, I classified girls as chestnut, sorrel, or bay. Her father was quite a celebrity. He was very old, a carpenter by trade, and had fought in the Civil War. When my father once complimented him on his hale-and-hearty appearance, and asked him how he had managed to live to such a healthy old age, he made a remark which I then thought original with him: 'Ye want to know why I've lived so long? Well, it's because I had sense enough to run like hell at the second battle o' Bull Run.'

Pansy was the apple of his eye. She was pretty, in the slightly oversolid bucolic manner, and was what was called 'pert' in her conversation. On warm summer evenings, when the roads were fragrant with locust blossoms, I often rode down to the store to sit on the piazza with her and the old man, who would tell us stories of what was still known as 'the War.' He often told the same tale, but since he was a great liar and never told it the same way twice, it was never stale. Pansy was amorously inclined, and in this case, at least, any ideas I got into my head were initiated by her. She was something of a local belle, and had acquired the habit, in a rather bovine manner, of exercising, in male company, beguilements which were highly effective with the young farmer boys, grooms, and store clerks throughout the township. This is not to insinuate that she was not a thoroughly nice girl, and if I was flattered and inclined



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to dangerous plays of imagination in her regard, I was probably like the foolish one of the verse:—

*Stultus quando videt
Quod pulchra puellula ridet
Tum fatuus credit
Se quod amare velit—*

which is to say that when a fool sees a fair maid smile at him, he thinks it love when it's only flirtation. At any rate, Pansy in her way was a dear girl, and I might have made a fool of myself with her as with others had it not been for one of those fortunate flashes of common sense which have so often snatched me, by mere accident, from precipices of imbecility.

One evening we were sitting on the porch. The old man had talked himself to sleep, and began to snooze right in the middle of the Wilderness. Invention had tired him. Pansy and I were sitting closer together than the temperature warranted, and her arm was pressed caressingly against my shoulder. There was a crescent moon, and a gentle breeze enfolded us with the fragrance of the honeysuckle vine. If her head had followed her arm at that moment, God knows what might have happened. But Pansy, though (I still truly believe) a good girl, possibly intent on a bolder yet (I insist) entirely innocent (innocent in the conventional sense) attack upon my emotions, asked me suddenly whether I would like to see their new calf. It was so *darling*, she said, and had such lovely eyes and such a soft, wet nose. It was a temptation, for the calf of course was in the barn; and the barn was isolated and dark and full of hay. I fell, and said I'd love to see the calf. Merely for convention's sake, I think, Pansy lighted a stable lantern, so that we might

at least fulfill the ostensible purpose of really looking at the calf. Oh, how sweet and aphrodisiacally caressing is the odor of a cowbarn at night, with its indescribable blending of clover, cow manure, sour milk, and animal! A gentle tremor ascended my spine as I stepped over the threshold, and I drew Pansy's soft form closer to my side as we stumbled over the rough boards by the dim and swinging light in her hand. I had lost all interest in the calf, and dear Pansy I believe had completely forgotten it. Yet we dared not *not* look at it—half craving, half dreading what might happen when we had seen it.

But here Pallas Athene—ever my guardian goddess—intervened. Pansy walked into the stall, put her chubby arm about the calf's neck, and held the stable lantern at arm's length in front of her. And here they were—both confronting me, the dim rays of the lantern illuminating both their faces. Fascinated, I gazed upon them. They appeared like two sisters—helpless, bovine, kindly; infinite vacuity looked out at me from those two pairs of large, swimming eyes. The expression of Pansy's warm and moist lips was not more invitingly tender than the soft, velvety nozzle of the calf. There they stood,—poor innocents,—two calves together; and I gazed and gazed, hypnotically held in the light of the lamp, until I did not know which was Pansy and which calf. And I bent down and kissed the calf tenderly on the nose. Then I went out quietly, and untied my horse from the hitching post. Pansy followed me out. There were tears in her eyes when she said good-night, as I mounted and rode away—sadly, but not without a sense of relief.

(To be continued)

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